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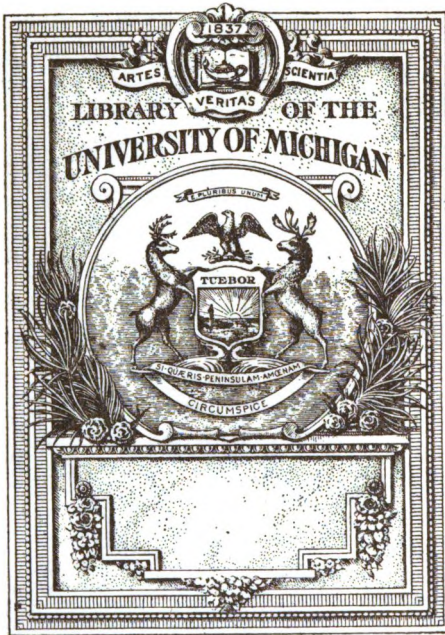
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THE THEBAN EAGLE  
AND  
OTHER POEMS

BY  
CHESTER ALLYN REED



BOSTON  
SHERMAN, FRENCH & COMPANY  
1913

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## THE THEBAN EAGLE

How was it, Pindar, that with earthly touch  
Thou still could'st an immortal beauty serve,  
Could'st build so richly and believe so much,  
Yet never from a worldly temper swerve?  
Song did not yield her highest service here  
To purge thy spiritual atmosphere.

Gold is the child of Zeus, he says, and one  
Who can possess it under fortune's smile,  
Has what is best of things beneath the sun—  
If public praise descend on him the while.  
Each feature of success was dear to thee,  
A hired advocate of victory.

Yet is the poet's feeling in thy line,  
For thee the purple hours proclaim the spring,  
The full moon glows with periodic sign,  
Spectator of thy first Olympic ring.  
Affecting are the verses which express  
The tragedy of human nothingness.

Upon thy languid island of the dead  
The ocean airs unceasingly shall blow,  
And peace, a wan majestic peace, be shed.  
The faces of the flowers thou didst know,  
And violets are in thy marshy ground,  
And meadow grasses in thy wreaths are wound.

—Kings are my foremost choice, and yet no less  
Demos and oligarch the gods create;  
The honorable man may each caress  
And leave the ultimate event to fate—  
Was it of such a policy as thine  
The saying flourished, a Bæotian swine?

Thy style is like a mountain torrent strong,  
Spontaneous and beautiful and free;  
No single joyful aspect lingers long,  
Yet everywhere a deep vitality.  
In a calm pool it loiters, or, again,  
Leaps into miracle of sparkling rain.

In that Greek world how vigorous the life,  
Activity and confidence how high!  
The cities crowding to the friendly strife,  
While long-oared galleys back and forward ply;  
The favored Rhodes, new-risen from the deep;  
Ægina, where the sons of Ajax sleep!

And Sicily before she knew decay—  
Did the gray olive flourish then at will?  
Did travelers behold, as we to-day,  
The beauty seen from Naxos' \* ancient hill,  
The stately mountain, and the sun's delight  
In painting blues upon the outspread sea,  
The many coves, the little beaches white,  
Odysseus in the far-off vacancy?

\* Tarmina.

How was it, Pindar, to whose name we bow—  
A mighty leader in the ways of song,  
Wast thou not what we term Philistine now,  
A waiter only on the great and strong?  
Deficient in the spiritual sense  
Which is a need of all intelligence?

Or was it that the nature of thy verse,  
The hollow task to flatter victory,  
Was to thy spirit degradation's curse,  
Undoer of thy aspirations high?  
And that to other hearers thou hadst shown  
A way of life more noble, more thine own?

It may be true, but this is also true:  
Much has been lost, O Greece, since thy decay,  
Yet something has been added wholly new,  
Cast up by sightless forces into day;  
No writer of the modern world could be  
So coldly careless of humanity.

Inhuman were they, scarce a kindly thought  
Went to a stranger or a stranger land.  
Beyond the city charity was nought;  
Careless of alien men they lived and planned.  
The sword consumed the captive, and his fate  
The laws of warfare did not reprobate.

Whether the terrible vicissitudes  
Besetting life were always in their mind;  
Or whether many mountains, seas, and woods  
Made strangers always seem of hostile kind;  
The masterpieces of the Age of Gold  
Have often something of repulsive cold.

Ours is a different day, a different aim—  
Progress so much at least has surely done—  
Warmed by a bright and sympathetic flame  
Of many centuries of unison.  
Our hatred hardly has the hostile sense  
Of that old obdurate indifference.



## SCULPTURE

SCULPTURE, with thy blossom white  
In these vast and silent halls,  
Give me counsel of delight,  
Name the influence which falls  
From thy marble till the soul  
Yields itself to thy control.

Does resemblance bring the tear,  
Human aspect touch the heart?  
Man to man is not so dear  
That a senseless counterpart  
Of his body thus can move  
Tides of overwhelming love.

Do the mutilations aid?  
Does the shattered goddess speak  
Of a past which she surveyed,  
Youthful, with unclouded cheek?  
Age and wounds upon the stone—  
Have they pathos of their own?

Wrecks of a surpassing time,  
Lovely still in their decay,  
Tell they more than when their prime  
Spoke in some far-distant day?  
To completeness should we give  
Less than ruins now receive?

Ah, it is the thought of those  
Who had power to shed this light,  
Who, supremely-gifted, chose  
Always and with ease the right;  
Souls whose vision swept the deeps  
Where unclouded beauty sleeps.

Still an almost personal  
Presence of them fills the air;  
Nimbus, halo, aureole,  
Garb divine these statues wear;  
Garment woven of a beam  
Flashed from some abode supreme.

Or such burning purpose dwelt  
In these workers that their art  
Made its vital impress felt  
More than the mechanic part.  
They who first set beauty free  
Well may touch humanity.

Messages great-hearted, gay,  
They have left upon the stone—  
Greetings of an older day  
When perfection's face was known,  
Greetings which the sons of men  
Gather with delight again.

Little, struggling artists here  
Find incentive for their aim,  
Sympathy direct and dear  
For the hope they dare not name:  
Hope to add to beauty's store  
One accepted tribute more.

Surely, they whose lives were spent  
In her service, who in youth  
Saw the darkness slowly rent,  
Scanty beams announce the truth;  
Lived at last with beauty's smile  
Fondly on them all the while;

Surely, patience, care, and love,  
Struggling hope and sometimes joy—  
All exalted states which prove  
Constancy to high employ—  
Surely, these their works impress,  
Could we look with steadiness.

Music has its secrets too,  
Painting opens vistas wide  
Where they see who wander through  
Blessèd counsels by their side.  
These may be obscure to one  
Who can read the carven stone.

Who can feel thy blossoms white,  
Sculpture, in his very soul,  
Who is conscious of the height,  
Sympathizes with the goal;  
Has his glimpse of beauty here,  
Views the stone with love sincere.

Skopas and Praxiteles,  
Phidias, the master-mind;  
They whose sea-nymphs in the breeze  
Flutter garments unconfined;  
They whose Victories arrayed  
Niké's Attic balustrade.

How they loved and how they wrought,  
How they dwelt on limb and face!  
While combining noble thought,  
How their statues speak of grace!  
How the drapery is warm  
On each soft and breathing form!

Sometimes on the Parthenon,  
Where the headless figures sit;  
Name and purport wholly gone,  
Women in affection knit;  
Shrine of feeling which the eye  
Cannot pass composed and dry.

Sometimes where a single shape,  
God or hero, stands alone  
Fettered down beyond escape  
Lest he may despise the stone,  
Rise by some unconscious power,  
Disappear like passing flower.

Victory, with great white wings,  
Is it news of earthly fight  
Only which thy presence brings,  
Poising in this posture light?  
Hast not also word of gain  
In the mind's oppressed domain?

Or that strong and sceptred man \*  
Whose extended arm suggests  
All of Rome's imperial plan,  
Where invincible he rests  
On the marble, and would bring  
All the world to love a king!

Yes, my mistress, blossom white,  
Sculpture in these silent halls,  
Thou hast told me of delight,  
Answered to my spirit's calls.  
Ends the message, knows the soul  
All the range of thy control?

\*Augustus Cæsar

Hast thou yet of beauty more,  
Is another secret thine?  
In the rich exhaustless ore  
Does another jewel shine?  
Have the masters handed down  
Other cause for their renown?

Calmness, steadiness of mien,—  
Is it chance or rule of art,  
Tell me, that an air serene  
Harbors here in every part?  
All have felt it, felt the still,  
Stainless peace as highest skill.

This is thought, the sway of law,  
Felt within, though faintly known.  
Not the fullest light they saw,  
Not triumphant they are shown.  
Diffident, who yet will make  
Step on step without mistake.

And this air of calm beside  
Was expressive of belief  
By a long experience tried  
To their hearts; not bringing grief—  
No, nor joy—a wider view,  
Blending durably the two.

In a world past finding out  
These great artists gave the face  
Of their figures—fighters stout,  
Gods or youths who strip to race—  
Gave to all a look which seems  
To protest against extremes.

Comprehension of the worst  
Seems to be there, knowledge, too,  
Of the best of life—a burst  
As of sunshine struggling through,  
Checked by some reflection deep  
Which shall sorrow's balance keep.

An impression they create  
Of transcending all the doubt  
Which attends our human fate;  
Of prevailing in the rout  
Of life's hopes, and here to be  
Calm amid uncertainty.

To have learned unmoved to meet  
The dread thought that nothing stays,  
To defy not, nor to sit  
In despondency, but raise  
Faces full of inward light  
To the sky, though it be night.

We have this dread thought unlearned;  
Promise of a certain goal  
We pursue and think it earned  
By our agony of soul.  
Say our feet shall rest at last  
In a land unlike the past.

Restless and importunate,  
With no sense of endless time,  
Fed with hopes which ever yet  
Cheated mortals of their prime;  
Cowards, who refuse to see  
Nature's face unflinchingly—

Seek this spot, ye of to-day.  
See where Theseus sits among  
Wrecks of figures; though but clay,  
Hermes see, the grave, the young;  
See how Mars himself is full  
Of a patience wonderful.

Full of acquiescence sweet  
In a life they cannot know.  
Neither good nor bad they greet  
As finalities, but show  
Faces in whose noble air  
Joy and grief accordant are.



## AN APRIL WALK

THE sun of spring is pouring down  
On forest trees which show no change.  
The oak and beech still wear the brown  
In this sweet light, austere and strange.  
The birch and chestnut do not hear  
Or do not tell us what is near.

But by the roadside, in the fields,  
Where brooks race by and catkins swing;  
And with long buds in soft pink shields  
The shadbush shames its blossoming;  
By shallow pools where hylas cry  
And yellow osiers paint the sky—

Her feet have touched the country-side.  
The breath of April there has blown.  
Now down this cart-path opening wide  
Sounds the pine warbler's monotone,  
As with short, even note he calls  
To spring's returning prodigals.

Beneath his station's ample shade  
The needles lie; but further on,  
Where birch and oak and chestnut spread  
And where, beneath the May-time sun,  
Will the pink lady-slipper shine  
With star grass and with columbine;

To-day bare boughs and withered leaves—  
A sense of desolation deep  
Is all the wanderer receives,  
In such unsightliness they sleep,  
So bleached by weeks of winter rain,  
So twisted into shapes of pain.

Yet even here the sun gives hope;  
Patches of soft, deep, withered moss  
Have felt him on this sheltered slope  
And sprung in dazzling green across:  
A flood of tiny palm trees gay  
Sent from a tropic holiday.

And little azure butterflies  
Dance on before us as we go,  
Like fairy insects from the skies,  
The faint blue skies which overflow  
And from the empyrean high  
Wash down its own bright blazonry.

And cinquefoil in the path looks up  
With dimpled petals all of gold;  
And eyebright, with its blue-tinged cup,  
By friendly comradeship made bold;  
And, where the leaf mould skirts the ridge,  
The blooms of early saxifrage.

To one whose wonder is not dead,  
Whose heart is warm for common things,  
Who seeks whatever light is shed  
Though but a wayside weed upsprings,  
Who does not find in small and great  
The differences which govern fate—

To him these sights have all the worth  
Of much that in the ways of men  
Is kept before our eyes from birth  
To compass with deceit and pain;  
And life has more instructive grown  
To one who makes this wood his own.

Instructive, for the means of joy  
Are at our feet, and we look far  
Coldly and all our wit employ  
On prizes to be won in war.  
Deem in our hearts no object good  
Unless it bear the stain of blood.

With flaunting banners we must pass,  
Out of the press our joy is torn;  
Many must fall that few, alas,  
May show how laurel leaves adorn.  
Must fall, and with reluctant eye  
Behold another's victory.

But Beauty is accessible  
To all who seek her, with a smile  
She gives from sources ever full;  
None gains on her by force or guile.  
And in the precincts of her state  
Equality has banished hate.

She is the same through many forms,  
Man's chiefest type of permanence.  
In mental changes, moral storms,  
Disaster comes and long defence;  
The True, the Good, beset remain,  
While Beauty sweeps from gain to gain.

And so Arcturus in the sky,  
This bloodroot at my feet, and there  
Above the gray barn, joyfully  
The swallows circling in the air—  
Dear, gentle birds, this morning come  
With their blue wings and breasts of foam—

Mean Spring to me. They one and all  
In a charmed region of my mind  
Are April. And in darkening Fall.  
Or when the snowflakes arm the wind,  
And all the outlines of the trees  
Are white and lovely harmonies ;

It yet is joy to turn to spring,  
To know the well known star will look  
With its red beams and seem to bring  
Its wakening to this little brook,  
Which dashes through the vine-grown wall  
Near where the bloodroot stalks are tall.

And on the morrow, when the sun  
Is bright and warm, upon the air  
All gold-enwoven, frost-bespun,  
The snowy globes will tremble there;  
Each flower half hidden by the high,  
Broad leaf which guards its infancy.

Along the wall their line is spread,  
Some scarcely bursting from the ground,  
Others still leaf-enwrapped, with head  
Beneath their purple shelter bound;  
Or in full white they greet the day,  
In close, inscrutable array.

And over them will dip and wheel,  
Or twitter from this orchard tree,  
Where their blue wings of flashing steel  
Fold for a moment's respite free,  
Until they rise and sweep away  
Impatient of a longer stay—

The birds of spring whom Shakespeare called  
As swift as hope, and said they dared  
After the daffodil enthralled  
The winds of March. And on the bared,  
Sun-beaten isles of Grecian clime  
These had their bards in earlier time.

Anacreon knew them, and their voice  
On many a morning broke his dreams;  
And Rhodian children, girls and boys,  
Swept through the town in joyful streams  
And called the swallow to their shore  
And sang his song from door to door.

The Isle of Roses loved to hear  
That childish clamor rise again,  
Which in old custom begged for cheer  
Of cheese and wine and cakes of grain—  
A little feast, a mimic rite,  
To speed the swallow's advent bright.

It lives in Athenæus still—  
Out of the dull, pedantic book  
Where no creative forces thrill,  
Fancies of unknown writers look;  
Lilies upon a muddy stream,  
Light in a labyrinthine dream.

And here, amid the dust and glare  
Of winter's sordid wreck and waste,  
How wonderful the buoyant air  
With which each bud and blade is graced,  
How wonderful the vivid sense  
They give of hope and confidence!

Later a thousand thousand leaves  
Will dull the wonder to our sight;  
The power majestic June achieves  
Will make this day as wintry night;  
Yet something will have lingered here  
In this less gentle atmosphere.

April is sacred and apart;  
The fires of youth revive again,  
A movement of the sluggish heart  
Comes with the buds' resistless strain;  
We feel the infinite; our fate  
Seems with the gods incorporate.

A miracle begins anew—  
The birth of life. Each trivial task  
Sinks to its valuation true;  
Word of the hidden deep we ask.  
*Once* with a mighty thought move on,  
*Once* with a stable truth are won.

## MAGELLAN

(1519-1521)

FAR stretches now the blue Pacific Sea!  
Out of the black-walled strait which bears his  
    name,  
With roar of cannon for the victory,  
Triumphant-eyed, the navigator came.  
Vainly the sullen waters surge and freeze  
Before thy course, O stern-faced Portuguese!

Out on the shoreless main, beneath the Cross,  
Holding his men to his deep purpose bound,  
O'er wastes swept only by the albatross  
Westward he bore to prove the world is round.  
Others had brought conjectures; he would  
    bring  
The circled orb to his adopted king!

Others had studied and avowed its mould,  
Or guessed it in a word more near the truth.  
Hipparchus with his speculations bold—  
Who but a Greek to shelter wisdom's youth?  
Who but a Portuguese to force reply  
If ocean frowned on human scrutiny?

The oldest daughter of the sea since Tyre,  
With her green mantle and her blowing hair  
Fair Portugal made captive of her sire



And rode his darkest ways without a care.  
The sailors of her greatness held the clue  
Which gives existence with the deathless few.

The East was theirs by many an hour of toil  
And many a hardy deed along the way.  
They saw the breakers on Bojador boil  
And league on league of sandy Africa;  
The Line, the Congo—and abeam still bore  
The jealous outline of an endless shore.

Until the day when Diaz in the cold  
Passed the great Cape and, lo, the way was  
free.

Then at a touch the eastern kingdoms old  
Sprang from their long unbroken mystery,  
And the far Indian Ocean was aflame  
With splendor of the new invading name.

These were her seamen—like the Roman sword,  
The English sense of government, the grace  
Which France imparts—each from a secret  
hoard,

A special benefaction to the race.  
These were her seamen—and Magellan hid  
A great inheritance in all he did.

Dark-featured mariner, whose portrait hangs  
In Madrid's gallery of Ultra-Mar,  
Wast thou not one to undergo the pangs

Of famine and of doubt dissimilar?  
Thy face of strength, the eyes' expressive  
glance,  
The bold sea-temper of thy countenance!

Westward, the cry! Morn broke and evening  
set  
Where league by league they followed fast the  
sun;  
And still the sky and restless ocean met,  
Still with the steady wind their ships swept on.  
And once again across the unknown main  
A daring alien leads the sails of Spain!

A pupil of da Gama's gallant school,  
Voyages to him were like a holiday.  
All fortunes seemed to find his judgment cool,  
His courage past temptation of display.  
It is mischance that none was there to see  
And write the story comprehendingly.

The Lombard chronicler minutely tells  
Of storms averted by St. Elmo's fire,  
In unimportant matter he excels,  
And yet is silent where we most require.  
He tells each scarlet cap, each earthen dish,  
Which make the value of a catch of fish.

Thou great Pacific! Then thy name was won  
Which often since the mariner disowns.

A daily tempest and a clouded sun!  
Thy favor on that early voyage atones,  
When the weeks followed without added care  
From the calm ocean or the clement air.

They starved and they endured, they mutinied,  
They ate the leathern rigging from the mast.  
Three months without the land and some were  
dead,  
And hope and aspiration long were past.  
Insensible of effort even then,  
He stood unmoved amid his conquered men.

He merited to chronicle his deed  
One who had epic genius, who could write  
Like Camoens or him of nobler breed  
Who marshalled Satan's forces into fight.  
One who could picture to a reader's eye  
This figure of heroic constancy.

What was the early story of his name,  
Whence his endurance beyond mortal mould?  
A Portuguese adventurer he came,  
His youth in annals incompletely told;  
Of some repute, but not that he should wear  
A wreath of laurel on that raven hair.

With India's great Viceroys he had fought  
For Portugal in the far Eastern seas,  
And found his country value him at nought

Wounded and lame in her hard services.  
He saw the end of honorable fame,  
And slander fall in shadow on his name.

And eastward yet, in that Malayan port  
Where all the commerce of the isles went by,  
And from Timor and far Japan resort  
Ships of a strange and savage symmetry,  
With sandal-wood from low Pacific key  
Or cloves and nutmegs from the Banda Sea—

He was the hero of an ambuscade.  
In Hindustan he shared in Goa's storm.  
Soldier and sailor, and in either trade  
Intrepid, vigilant, and uniform.  
Profound in knowledge which the charts reveal,  
And resolute as indurated steel.

Yet he could never rise nor win advance  
Nor much repute, and why is still obscure.  
Resolved he was, perhaps to arrogance;  
A leader by his own investiture.  
Disgrace succeeded for a cause unknown  
And left Magellan distant from the throne.

He had great purposes which must not lie  
Unfinished while the life in him was strong;  
A consciousness, one thinks, of mission high,  
The world against him could not make him  
wrong.

Impatiently at last he broke the chain  
Woven at birth, and sought the court of Spain.

Is he with the disloyal to be classed?  
His countrymen have long maintained the word.  
In the rough mountain village peasants passed  
His altered home with the old anger stirred.  
Affection handed down from distance dim,  
Whate'er it signify, is not for him.

Past islands where the gaze could never tire,  
Bright glimpses of rich bloom and palm-girt  
dell,  
Lit by unnumbered birds on plumes of fire,  
Still west he steered his steady caravel.  
Leaving these heavy-scented isles to sleep  
Like purple clouds upon the azure deep.

Who knew the length of this unending track?  
The earth, though round, might spread its  
giant orb  
Till years should find them toiling o'er its back  
And ocean still their anxious looks absorb;  
And life itself should insufficient be  
To pass the planet's dim convexity.

He held them on through famine, plague, and  
strife.  
Great be thy name, thou lonely man of power!  
A glory to the land which gave thee life,

A product of her brief and splendid hour!  
He held them on, and even seems to give  
His easy courage to the narrative.

A few days longer and he would have seen  
Tidore and Ternate and the clove trees shine  
With their unfailing leaves of glossy green,  
Perhaps where crimson blossoms intertwine,  
Have known his task completed, and have  
known  
Himself exalted on Fame's timeless throne.

Then had he died, possessing but a day  
The knowledge which proclaimed his vision true;  
Or had he waited death by slow decay,  
Secure of one triumphant interview;  
Had known fruition and for once have stepped  
Out of the fortress in his bosom kept,

And seen in other eyes his own success—  
This had been something. Yet we speak in  
vain;  
To such as he the world's applause is less  
Than we in our timidity explain—  
To such as he, who for their safety learn  
Unwounded from the world's neglect to turn.

He knew its scorn and apathy, and why  
Should he be proud to have its servile love?  
Yet at the last—and with a dying eye—

Not to himself his victory to prove—  
Yes, it is tragic that the stroke of fate  
Was not suspended o'er him fortunate.

That on that island off the far Ladrones  
In skirmish insignificant should fall  
The Captain who had crossed so many zones  
And been of conduct adequate in all.  
That other men should take the final prize,  
And he be sleeping under tropic skies.

One gained the credit who the will possessed  
To slay Magellan in the hour of need;  
In Spain Del Cano was a royal guest;  
Distinction, wealth and title were his meed.  
A globe encircled was the coat he won  
To pass the falsehood down from son to son.

The imitator praised on every side,  
The superficial taken for the great,  
The rabble running glad and open-eyed  
To see a charlatan in splendid state;  
The envy whose incompetence has failed  
Crowned for the very act itself assailed—

The sight is common, yet it stirs the heart  
To anger. Shall our interest be served  
Always by those whom we have set apart  
In place of reprobation undeserved?  
Must one who is original behold  
But faces always of aversion cold?

[ 27 ]

Thou couldst not from thy Malay island see  
The autumn morning when a score of men  
Brought to San Lucar's bay the Victory,  
Last of the fleet, but back to port again.  
Thou couldst not know thy fame should live  
    apart  
Among the great whose peer thou surely art.



## SOCIOLOGY

Men make their own history, but they make it not of  
their own accord or under self-chosen conditions, but  
under given and transmitted conditions.

MARX: *The Eighteenth Brumaire.*

Is self-reliance always cold  
And is it by conjunction old  
That sympathy allied should be  
With weakness and dependency?  
The prophets of our time declare  
If crime be red, look to it, you  
Who wealth and each advantage share  
And burdens all too few!

"The pauper is your own disgrace,  
The fault is yours, ye high of place,  
Upholders of a hard régime  
Where mal-adjustment is supreme.  
Failure and vice are as disease,  
Or rather forces misapplied  
By organized societies  
In their pedantic pride."

A great departure for the sons  
Of strong New England Puritans,  
Of Dutchmen who maintained the fight  
Alone with Spain's unbroken might!

They bore the weight of what they were  
And thus in self-reliance grew,  
But we wage war on Character  
For Marx, the conquering Jew.

Things economic are the key,  
He says, to human history.  
Changes and progress have their head  
In this prosaic need for bread.  
The great ideas of every time  
Are synchronous with active trade,  
For each new spiritual prime  
This basis has been laid.

Within mechanic forces pent  
Man is as his environment.  
The poor descend—no longer free—  
To vice and crime and misery.  
The reputable but display  
The outcome of conditions good,  
The secret of the higher way  
An incident of Food.

A great departure for the sons  
Of blue and gray-clad veterans  
Who won at Gettysburg or bright  
Made the lost cause at Marye's Height!

By over-emphasis we err,  
A too mechanic creed instil,  
And we wage war on character  
Who misconceive the Will.

We figure an ethereal flow,  
Impelled by forces to and fro.  
And yet, though strong the logic be,  
Man turns to spontaneity.  
Though few an explanation dare,  
The moral judgment rests on this,  
That each one for himself must bear  
The weight of what he is.

Why if his conduct and intent  
Be fixed by the environment?  
In that case justly shall we blame  
The social whole from which he came;  
But if he have a freeman's share,  
If choice in a degree be his,  
Then for his good we bid him bear  
The weight of what he is.

Long, long has self-reliance been  
Man's fearless guide from scene to scene.  
Though we defer to forces strong  
Some moments to ourselves belong,  
Or seem to, and they bear us high,  
Where human nature braves the night,

Where flower and form eternally  
Marvels of inner light.

Truth loved and sought without renown,  
Struggle and effort beaten down;  
The will in yet unconquered mood  
Though nourished upon bitter food;  
Adversity's corrective grace  
And solitude's despairing hour—  
These are the light, and ye efface  
Or much reduce their power.

Beware then, lest the good ye seek  
Make human nature merely weak;  
Lest sympathy and kindness bring—  
O strange result—more suffering.  
Let self-reliance feel the spur,  
Courage be factor in our bliss—  
Or down will come the character  
Of whole communities.

And shall we then the strength retain  
To cope with what is yet of pain?  
—For still in Kindness' realm will be  
Alloy of evil endlessly.  
Upon one thing are nations built  
And that is Character,—the rest  
Is ornament of gold or gilt,  
Subordinate at best.

It matters not. The word has gone  
And this momentous change comes on.  
Determined is the age to try  
The power of help and sympathy,  
Determined to esteem them more  
Than the old strife-developed will—  
The sword we confidently bore,  
Careless of every ill.

## BOOKS

Voylà que c'est de bien choisir les thresors qui se  
puissent affranchir de l'iniure, et de les cacher en lieu  
où personne n'aille, et lequel ne puisse estre trahi que  
par nous mesmes.

MONTAIGNE.

Not to-day my heart I hide,  
Heedful of a worldly guide;  
Prudent counsels in the air,  
Preparations made with care;  
Not to-day the wary plan  
To distrust my fellow-man.

Come between us the decrees  
Of tyrannic differences.  
Life for me contains a call  
Which to him is farcical;  
All his jewels turn to glass  
Where my eyes unsparing pass.

Each of us the other fears,  
Each defends the work of years.  
By a theory we live  
Which to each is formative.  
What I have of insight dim  
Is not visible to him.

Acquiesce we, then, and keep  
What we value buried deep.  
But to-day I pass afar  
From this unacknowledged war  
To another land, where I  
Can regain tranquillity.

Where I commune face to face  
With the chosen of the race.  
Frankly they consort with me,  
Stoop to mediocrity ;  
Are not watchful, give their all  
Whether loss or gain befall.

Poets, romancers, both I know,  
Shelley, Stevenson, and Poe.  
This I value most to-day  
That unguarded lies the way,  
That without rebuke I find  
Access to an open mind.

To a mind without disguise,  
Yet where golden treasure lies !  
Paradox, and could not be  
Were my access wholly free.  
I have profit by their pen  
More than were they living men.

Tacitus, thy tragic page  
Makes thee great in every age.  
Wert thou in the flesh, what look  
Could I win, who read thy book?  
Thou, like us, wast fain to live  
Careful not too much to give.

Thou had'st wearied of my gaze,  
Worshipping each mighty phrase  
Where the very heart of Rome  
Palled, majestic seems to come—  
Agrippina's anguish deep,  
Otho in his dying sleep.

Though she falter, none the less  
History is prophetess.  
All that Alexander planned  
In the feast of Samarcand,  
Shall I leave it for device  
In a modern war of mice?

What his splendid valor bought,  
What he spread of Grecian thought,  
Would it profit more for me  
Always but myself to see?  
What will my experience bring  
To replace the youthful King?



Sometimes Plato, Kant, or Hume  
Guidance of my mind assume—  
Thinkers who affect our course  
With an unsuspected force;  
Factors in our lives no less  
For their unobtrusiveness.

Slighted by the masses, she  
Shapes them much, Philosophy.  
All unknown to them, she lives  
Under plain appellatives.  
All unseen, she is the star  
Of opinion popular.

I could number, name by name,  
Those whose fellowship I claim.  
Now, contentious, I admire  
Juvenal's consuming fire,  
Or an ally find within  
Page of Huckleberry Finn.

All are open,—do not seek  
With a worldly aim to speak,  
Do not fear to give their best  
Lest there come a worthier guest—  
Dwellers in a land where I  
Always find tranquillity.

# JULY

## I

### THE BROOK-SIDE

But now Beauty alone has had this fortune; so that it is the clearest, the most certain of all things and the most lovable.

PLATO: *Phaedrus*.

THE month is come when leaves grow dark  
After the lighter hues of June,  
When in the grass the meadow-lark  
Stands silent, when the ponds are strewn

With lilies like great silver stars.  
The month of lilies, for the road  
Shows them deep red about the bars  
Where cart-paths enter, or bestowed

Along stone walls in bright relief.  
Each vivid cup is lifted high,  
Or, hidden by the scrub-oak's leaf,  
It peeps from green security.

And in the sugar-maple tall  
The yellow wasps have built their home,  
Hanging aloft a hidden ball  
Where busy workers go and come.

The yarrow white, the wayside flax  
Butter-and-eggs, grow far and wide;  
Across the lane the tiny tracks  
Where partridge chicks ran side by side.

In open places by the stream  
The cardinal shows a touch of fire  
From the long crimson buds which gleam  
Along its unawakened spire.

The amber water ripples near  
With light and shade so sweetly strown,  
Such graceful curves of beauty here,  
Such fitness in each mossy stone;

Such freshness in the water-cress  
Contrasted with the brook's soft brown,  
So full of all suggestiveness  
This current ever coursing down;

So gorgeous past all words to tell  
The slender insects hovering by—  
The bearers of a forest spell  
And others blue as summer sky—

It is as if to this one spot  
The spirit of the summer came,  
Slow-paced, and with a crowning knot  
Of water-lilies white as flame;

And in her hand long, drooping sprays  
Of meadow grass and blades of corn;  
About her all the scent of days  
When blossoms of wild grape are born.

Past the tall cedars on the hill,  
Whose berry bunches, softly blue,  
Gleam like white frosts when nights are still,  
In contrast with the trees' deep hue,

She rambled on to this sweet place,  
This brook-side in the noonday heat,  
And rested for a little space,  
Watching the water at her feet;

And found the presences she loved,  
And dwells invisible, and dips,  
Where yonder lengthening ripple moved,  
The stream with idle finger-tips.  
Oh, there are days when all is proved,  
Such mastery the soul equips!

Such days await the lot of all  
Who look with simple, loving eyes  
On nature—not her carnival,  
Her rare and special services;

Not these alone, but everyday  
And common aspects which demand  
Nought but attention and a way  
Of thinking which one can command

By faith that life has other joys  
Than merely worldly ones. At dawn  
In summer, ere the sun destroys  
The coolness of the shade-swept lawn;

And while on grass blades many a ball  
Of dew still rests like light and air  
Made tangible to show us all  
The undecaying beauty there—

Between two fence rails to the east,  
All the fresh glory of the hour  
By every change of sky increased,  
Spreads like a strange and phantom flower

A spider's web its curves of grace;  
Not like the many forms we see,  
Which seem to enter on the race  
With careless spontaneity;

But every link with purpose wrought,  
Each floating film the path of mind,  
Utility the constant thought  
This unembellished work behind.

The day-star lifts, and on each thread  
The beaded waterdrops hang gay,  
Flashing with white or piercing red  
While the young sunbeams let them stay

In glory of their jewelled fire—  
Row upon row of spheres of flame,  
Which sink, or suddenly aspire  
In loveliness beyond a name.

Ah, the whole structure filled with light  
Which yet seemed perfect ere the sun—  
Although a pallid child of night.  
Now, with its hour of penance done,

It joins the rail to that below  
With patch of splendor. At the sigh  
Of morning air, it ripples slow  
And comes to rest invisibly.

Until the colors pass and blend  
With memories of things that were.  
But one whose heart can comprehend,  
Whose mind can truly register;

Who knows the value of the sight,  
Its permanence, its power to raise,  
By its perfection, to the light  
Some purpose which in gloom decays;

He walks in triumph, and esteems  
Lightly the happiness of men  
Who never in the land of dreams  
Can lose themselves, nor sadden when

The glory of the parting west  
Fades quite away and all is gone;  
When bright leaves fall or boughs, once dressed  
With dogwood flowers, show green alone.

Who look, and in a certain sense  
See beauty in these out-door things—  
Colors of varied excellence,  
Creatures which walk and move with wings,

Water and sky, each in its place—  
Yet never can be brought to know  
The promise in the wild flower's face,  
The charm of trees beneath the snow;

The grass and clover buds which dwell  
Before the mower makes his way;  
The magic news the swallows tell  
On that first early April day;  
The pages of the chronicle  
Which spring unfolds from day to day.

They have their gain and it is much—  
One need not be fanatical  
Nor seek to disinherit such  
As value less the spirit's call.

They see at least, and clearly see,  
The objects which their senses give,  
Armed with a test of certainty  
The less capriciously they live.

Amid confused appeals of life  
They choose a practicable part—  
Half of the voices in the strife  
They leave forgotten and apart.

They seek not to combine the two;  
The hard instruction to receive  
That both are portions of the true,  
That though men live by bread, they live

Also by stores within the soul.  
—The earthly rather, what appears  
Within the logical control  
Of Mammon and his followers,

These things they have, and having them,  
They are content and pass along  
In lives we cannot all condemn,  
Spent often upon action strong



By which the world's machinery  
Is made more perfect. Skies grow black  
Where fleets of trading vessels ply,  
Mountains are pierced from front to back;

And change, a constant outer change,  
Goes on about us. More and more,  
Matter takes on enchantment strange,  
And multitudes its course adore.

Might it not be if such could turn  
And find the best which nature gives,  
They would not the advantage spurn,  
Refreshed by sure restoratives?

I name them humbly: Rest from strife,  
From that high tension of the brain  
In which we pass so much of life  
And plot unspiritual gain.

By watchfulness and guarded speech  
By cunning and by force of will  
The credulous to overreach,  
Or, at our need, to crush and kill.

For none who enters can avoid  
The rules of combat, can depart  
With credit ere he has destroyed  
The nomenclature of the heart.

It is our doom—though how or why  
To reconcile it with the glow  
Of love and aspiration high  
Which gives us all we have below,

And makes this life for moments still,  
Or hours or days, a thing as when  
In Saturn's happy reign each rill  
Ran honey, and unfallen men

Lived without pain or grief or fear,  
Earth, unrequited, gave them food,  
Spring never faded from the year,  
But in its first sweet freshness stood—

Is still the mystery. But lo,  
The meadow where the cowslips lie,  
And where their yellow petals glow  
Expanded to the April sky

Contains a mystery as old  
And more benignant. Why is given  
This spirit of celestial mould,  
Beauty from unknown chaos driven?

What genii have its pinions bound?  
Why in a world mutation-swept,  
Where nothing is unshaken ground,  
And man in consternation kept,

Find we an absolute in this?  
While truth is hidden from the sight  
How came, and o'er what far abyss,  
This Benefactor infinite?

I name another gift of her  
Who is about us with a store  
As numerous as leaves that stir,  
Or grains upon a sandy shore.

The sense that all is Real, that all  
Shows itself here without disguise,  
That friendships made will never pall,  
Nor knowledge give us colder eyes.

The moonlight on the scarlet oaks  
At dusk on late October eves,  
When in a rain of silver strokes  
We stand among the fallen leaves—

Who thinks of feigning or pretence  
In face of such a light as this,  
Of envy clothed in deference,  
Or apathy beneath a kiss?

Or any of the shows we meet  
Which strive to hide the self within,  
The endless drama of deceit  
Which no assault of truth can win?

Here is sincerity abrupt,  
And earnestness without a flaw,  
Which no caprices interrupt,  
A calm, invariable law.

The sense of Permanence. Though soon  
We know this scene will speed away  
And all the light of summer's noon  
Pass like a phantom from the day;

Still it will come again as fair.  
Another year unchanged by time  
Will reappear this golden air,  
These lilies in their splendid prime

As if to-day. The brook will run  
With the same water, far aloft  
A crow will screaming king-birds shun  
With silent haste on pinions soft.

The tanager in the white-oak wood,  
A flash of red among the trees,  
Will sing again in pensive mood  
His hoarse, wild-flavored melodies.

The spirit of the summer, light,  
Immortal, with her liliated crown  
Fresh-glancing in the morning light,  
Past the tall cedars will come down.

## II

### THE SEA

Through fields where clover patches stand,  
Through grasses waving to the knee,  
Through daisies scattered on each hand,  
This narrow path winds to the sea.

It barely finds its way along,  
So thick the press on every side  
Of redtop and of herd grass strong,  
Which seek its humble course to hide.

Each spire of grass, each clover's head,  
Is fair enough to fill the eye;  
The white and yellow, green and red,  
To where the uplands touch the sky.

The grass with tiny branches stands,  
And seeded sprays, a fairy tree;  
Held to the eye, the heart expands  
To note its tender symmetry.

Or the bright clover claims a look,  
The lowly white or red of hue,  
Soft leaves asparkle where they took  
From yon dark cloud its silver dew.

We saw the path and fields at first  
In early evening, with the sun  
Just set behind us, when a burst  
Of sudden color had begun

To touch the clouds about the sky.  
Far in the east they faintly glowed  
With pink; soft piles of rose swept by  
Above, whose trailing edges showed

How low they rested; and on earth  
The ruddy light on green and gray  
Old wall and ash tree like new birth  
Swept all their wonted tints away.

We climbed the rough Virginia fence  
Which o'er our path went zig-zag on—  
While every step through clover dense  
And thronging redtop sprays was won—

And saw near by a little pool  
Throw back the light, a lovely shade  
Of pink so delicate, the cool  
Waters one feared might chance invade

Its warmth and make it fainter. Next  
A patch of yellow mustard flowers,  
Through which our path wound on perplexed  
And fallen petals lay in showers.

Up a low ridge, and there beyond,  
Sand dunes with grasses scattered light,  
Then a white beach, and the great Sound  
Rolling beneath the coming night.

Far out, a schooner's dusky wings  
Gleamed with the pink and then were gray;  
Nearer, a little dory springs  
Fast on its shoreward course away.

The moon came out, the clouds flew past  
Until the sky was clear. The stars—  
Or two or three which longest last  
In moonlight, one was red like Mars—

Looked down on us that summer night.  
The breakers fell upon the sand  
With rhythmic tumult; broad and bright,  
Swept back from the unyielding land,

They left great tracks of silver sheen  
Which shone a moment, then again  
Were all submerged by some strong, green  
Newcomer from the ocean plain.

And as they curled in to the shore,  
A line of fire was at each base,  
Each hollow held a straight, bright score—  
The badge of this wild moonlit race.

We sat there, lost, as all are lost  
Who look with feeling on the sea—  
Its steady roar, its endless host,  
Its sameness and its novelty,

Its free wild beauty, and yet more,  
Its strangeness. Other things we tame  
And make familiar by a store  
Of uses, but this is the same

In loneliness and utter lack  
Of human influence and hope.  
It is as if along the back  
Of some fair hill of grassy slope

Cattle are feeding with their young—  
Small graceful yearlings, and still less,  
The little calves of milky tongue  
Which close around their mothers press.

And some are lying on the grass,  
Peace and content in their clear eyes,  
Inquisitive if strangers pass,  
And touched by human sympathies.

And suddenly should show its front,  
All unexpected near at hand,  
The quarry of some cave-man's hunt  
Before the ice age swept the land.



With curving tusks and long red hair,  
With more than elephantine height,  
Lost from a distant past, its stare  
Is clouded with primeval night.

A certain awful beauty reigns  
About it, but it knows them not,  
These peaceful feeders of the plains;  
Its race was run upon a spot

Too different for such knowledge, when  
From man's concerns the earth was free,  
And scarcely knew his cunning brain  
And puny form. Still more the sea

Goes back, goes back, and still goes back;  
Mountains have weathered down to plains,  
Life lost in jellied specks its track,  
While the sea rolls and counts its gains.

It needs the touch of a warm hand—  
So rapt one sits before this cold,  
Great, weltering monster on the strand,  
And almost feels the heart grow old—

To make one realize that life,  
A strong, true life is very near,  
As wonderful as this grand strife  
Of waters, and as pure and clear.

A hand has lain in mine, not once  
But often, this eventful day;  
A voice has spoken which outruns  
All that its owner's heart would say

Of tenderness and depth and truth;  
This lovely soul is very strong  
As well as beautiful; nor youth  
Nor age nor death can do it wrong.

Who loses faith in human kind,  
And finds his heart grown hard and sour,  
Who barter for his peace of mind  
Some disenchanting form of power;

Who, cynical, has robbed his rest  
Of kindly thoughts for fellow men,  
Who foolishly has fouled his nest  
And finds it never fair again;

Who thinks that all are selfish, all  
At heart ignoble, base, and deep—  
Though many proofs he can recall,  
And though the faith be hard to keep—

He fails. Himself has had the harm,  
Himself the torment and the plague;  
He fails, although he had the arm  
Of Kaled or of Scanderbeg.

Or with Rodrigo de Bivar  
He might have fared on emprise high,  
Or be the glory of his star  
Like Peter's with Pultowa nigh.

Or had he wisdom such as passed  
Through heaven and set the planets free,  
Or force like his who slept at last  
Beneath St. Helen's willow tree.

He fails, because he kills within  
The power to trust or hope again;  
All he has won or now can win  
Like finite things is fraught with pain.

He has forsworn the infinite,  
The journeys in the faultless blue,  
The stream of life, by which to sit  
And feel its breath makes green anew

Our deadness, but to taste and quaff  
Sends fire celestial through the soul,  
Purges away the dust and draff  
And tarnish of the world's control,

And wakens in the heart again  
The splendor of a vanished bliss;  
Best from the soul can soul regain  
The impulse to infinities

Which issues in great love, perchance  
Great purpose rare and hard to feel;  
Sweet undertones whose utterance  
Rises anon to joyful peal.

We must return into the strife  
With happy faces, and believe  
All that we can of human life;  
Not with the purpose to deceive

Our reason, but by keeping close  
To usages of cheerful thought;  
By looking often at the rose  
And hoping that its buds will not

Shrivel and die, but be as fair;  
By holding beauty to the heart;  
Finding it when it seems not there;  
Training the sense to beauty's part

In nature and in human things,  
In man and woman; losing none,  
No single spark, by which the wings  
Of spirit win ethereal tone;—

To keep a high receptive mood,  
Ready for insights which reveal  
Glimpses perhaps of some great good;  
Which holds at least beneath our heel

The constantly uprising shape  
Of pessimism, whose cold eyes  
Spell impotence with no escape  
From shades and crumbling nullities.

And which we cannot face and live—  
Medusa—but we still can learn  
Like Perseus a death-stroke to give  
While far away our eyes we turn.

And days like this long summer day,  
Full only of uplifting sights,  
And thoughts and hopes which long will stay,  
Come down from dear celestial heights,

Are helpful beyond words; and they  
Will come again and yet again.  
And though the days grow brief and gray,  
And snows replace November rain;

Yet soon will come the berries blue,  
With flowers to weave the lilied crown,  
And gliding past her cedars true,  
The gracious spirit will come down.

## THE BIRCH TREE

IN a field where falling snow  
Through the night had settled slow,  
Clinging where it chanced to fall,  
On the cedars by the wall,  
Or, in the more open space,  
On tall weeds of slender grace  
Which were golden-rods in time  
Of the soft September prime—  
Stood a birch tree, slim and white,  
And when the morning sky was bright,  
Oh, what a wild and lovely sight!  
And when the sun was in the blue  
At noon, although with hours too few  
To melt the snow, or even mar  
The beauty of one icy star  
Where it rested, pure as strain  
Of April robins after rain,  
Then did the tree become a thing  
For love and breathless wondering.

Bowed with the weight of snow, it stood  
Motionless in the dazzling flood  
Which over road and meadows flowed.  
Piles of unnumbered snowflakes lay  
Heaped in capricious disarray  
Far to the end of twig and spray.  
Spicules and stars and lace-like forms,  
The tender children of the storms

Clinging together without rule—  
Some with their tale of beauty full,  
And others broken in their flight  
Down from the leaden-colored height  
Before the morning sky was bright.  
Yet, like remains of some great art,  
These tiny ruins bore their part,  
And were the dearer to the heart.  
The under branches rested low,  
And meeting there the surface snow,  
A sheltered labyrinth they made  
Where chickadees flew unafraid.  
A stillness which we never see  
In summer when the leaves in glee  
Dance to the South wind's minstrelsy,  
Gave something sacred to the tree,  
Some not quite earthly mystery.  
As if a lovely shape of stone—  
Yet softer, of no substance known—  
By the wild spirits of the air  
This moment gone, were builded here.  
A vow for some defeat escaped,  
Some danger while their course they shaped  
High o'er the cloud-sea's tumbling floor;  
And on the first terrestrial shore  
In joyful mood this work had made,  
To show their gratitude for aid;  
Then paused and for a moment stayed.  
Regretting, even as they flew,  
This background of eternal blue

Crossed with these drooping curves of white  
And all submerged in golden light,  
A memory upon their flight.  
And we are come in time to see  
This white and azure harmony,  
Just from their shaping touches free.  
To every impulse consecrate  
By which the soul of man a mate  
Seeks in ideas of Beauty, far  
Removed though their stations are;  
And feels emotion, like a ray,  
Pass through him when his instincts say  
That here at last report is sent  
Direct from that dim continent.  
So like unearthly work it stands,  
So, like a child of other lands,  
Homage it unaware commands!  
Flashing with gleams, the sun's caress  
Scatters in generous tenderness;  
As veils of Eastern damsels long,  
The silk izárs of Arab song,  
Sparkle with jewels brought from far,  
From Guzarate and Malabar.  
This bark which shows like ivory,  
The pale green lichens on the tree—  
All seen and known the day before,  
But now some strangeness shades them o'er,  
Some grace invisible of yore.



Through the day and cold, still night  
The birch tree's beauty kept its height,  
And when the waning moon was bright.  
But in the morning, to the south  
The wind had changed, and from his mouth  
The sun-god sends the words of flame;  
Swift runners far and wide proclaim  
The snow must pass away and come  
Back to its pure celestial home.  
Then all these tangled flowers of snow,  
Diverse, uncounted, with the glow  
Of freshness, seemed to fade and flow  
Into each other, and to pass  
From life to a dull, shapeless mass.  
The surface took a glassy look,  
Soon water-sodden fragments shook  
The tree beneath them in their fall;  
And when the bluejay's screaming call  
Announced the sunset and the night,  
Where was the birch tree's veil of white?  
Where were the snow-stars, pure as strain  
Of robins after April rain?  
The lovely gift had fled again!  
Soon as it came, the grace was gone,  
And with no beauty but its own  
The saddened birch tree stood alone.

## FOG

OTHER winds must journey on  
Their long path alone;  
Nought for them but memories  
Of other more congenial days.  
Boreas was last at play  
With icebergs blue in Baffin's Bay—  
He is laughing yet  
With his comrades, cold and wet.  
Notus from the south  
Comes with dreamy smiles upon his mouth.  
He was asleep in an orange grove;  
Bright bloomed the flowers, sweet sang the birds  
above.

When the summons came,  
He darted up like living flame,  
Crushing with his hasty tread  
The sweet buds which made his bed;  
Their reluctant presence flows  
Ever round him as he goes.  
The western wind is fresh and free  
As the wild prairie.  
But all of these must journey on,  
Companionless and lone.

I stand upon the sounding shore  
Of the green Atlantic,  
Piled with surges frantic,  
And watch the glory of the morning sun.

Lo! in the dim horizon's verge  
A level shadow gray;  
You'd almost say  
The shadow and the blending sea were one.  
Turn your eyes and muse again  
On the vast, mysterious main.  
Silently  
On their broad wings the moments flee,  
Timeless though their message be.  
Fairy gates they open throw,  
Forms unseen of men before me go,  
Wherein I read  
Shadowy thoughts dissension-freed.  
Oh, might one ever lie,  
Sunk in this strange, delicious apathy,  
His lost thoughts absorbed into the sea!

What sudden Afrite shapes are these,  
Whirling in upon my dream?  
Tall, indistinct, which sway  
In flowing garments gray,  
Routing my sunny fancies with their hideous  
mien?  
In they come  
Across the foam,  
They seize me and envelop me,  
They veil the sky and drape the sea;  
I wake—earth, ocean, all are gone;  
The east wind's guide, the Fog, is come.

Off the bold headland of Cape Race  
Two mighty ocean streams embrace.  
Thou art their child, enormous birth,  
Ever rising, ever dying,  
Borne to distant parts of earth.  
We know thee only when the east  
Sends his salt-tainted messenger ;  
Silent thou com'st upon his wing,  
A ghostly form, a spectre of the giant sea.

## THE CITY

MANY colors, many lights and shades,  
Countless objects for our use or play,  
Church and store, the show of many trades,  
Add their pressure to the complex day.  
Like a flood the city's mood invades,  
Sweep the mind's security away.

Self-assertion on this burdened spot  
Has an air of profitless and null.  
All one's proud detachment is forgot  
While this force fills every crevice full,  
While this mighty presence ceases not  
To make valueless the personal.

Here each vehicle, each sign, each stone,  
Each shop-window, tells a human thought.  
Nature has withdrawn, we are alone  
With the mind of man to climax wrought;  
In this many-sided effort shown,  
In this open language clearly taught.

All the air contains it; we respire  
An excitement, exaltation free.  
Eye and ear have efficacy higher  
As from some enfolding energy.  
Undulations from the central fire  
Of the Will this influence may be.

And this multitude, which wears the mask,  
Walks the street—what sign does it display?  
Dare we to adventure on the task  
Of interpreting its mixed array?  
Is there any profit when we ask  
For a valuation of this clay?

For an inclination strong and deep  
Rises in us, draws us on to see,  
To absorb and sympathize and keep  
In the sphere of this vitality;  
That the human in us may not sleep  
Overmuch, but here awakened be.

Somehow grasp it with the inner sense,  
Outer, inner merged in one review.  
Unity, the cure the gods dispense  
For man's hours which unrelated flew,  
Here were gift of high significance,  
Where abiding elements are few.

Here, where instability achieves  
Recognition as a law supreme;  
Here, where play of civic life receives  
Adaptation for a mobile theme.  
Yet the chaos which about us heaves  
With persistence of a fevered dream,

Is not alien. None can stand apart  
Without risk from others of his kind.  
Would we know ourselves, we need the chart  
Of the wishes which seem mad or blind.  
Here are tidings of the human heart  
By the human hand set forth and signed.

Tidings many—and yet some which here  
Come to light from a confused whole,  
Are of those which multitudes make clear,  
Felt where seas of human faces roll.  
Where momentous differences appear,  
And extremes of destiny control.

Generalities which have their force  
In this mass of contrasts, this sublime  
Reaching upward with unswerving course  
Of benevolence, this selfish crime:  
Virtue of inexplicable source,  
This commercial life in sanguine prime.

---

All is change, yet permanence survives.  
Flexible, and yet unbending too,  
Man awaits each force which on him drives,  
Slowly moves his strange experience through.  
Humbled often, he again revives;  
Undismayed, his hopes the future woo.

In his paint and feathers, or with steel  
Girt about, or with an iron rod  
Breathing death and flame; where mounds reveal  
Cylinders inscribed to Asshur's god,  
Full of confident and holy zeal,  
Adjurations where we since have trod;

Keeping closed the carved and ancient hall  
Where the guilds of workers loved to be;  
Venice, stained with old Byzantium's fall,  
Rights exclusive in the Ocean Sea;  
Opportunist, egotist, in all,  
Changed in but how meagre a degree!

Yet his dress and customs know decay.  
To the sound of different words the smoke  
Of his votive incense floats away;  
Vanished is the famous Roman stroke  
Given when the dart began the fray;  
Gone the cloud of slaves when Haroun spoke.

Gone the speech \* in which the hoplite strong  
Called to his compatriots "the Sea!"  
On the day which saw the Euxine's long  
Rollers black before the north wind flee—  
Attic speech of enterprise and song,  
And the climax of antiquity.

\* It exists, of course, as a living language, but with little of its old influence and importance.



Gone the vogue of vices throned on high,  
Sovereignty employed for lust and blood;  
Nobles turn not now a haughty eye  
Over charters old and un-withstood.  
Hushed Religion's importuning cry,  
Secular is now the higher mood.

Yet the strong man's instinct is the same  
When he deals with weaker wills about;  
Selfish still the common thoughts we frame,  
Mean and savage passions seek us out.  
Lo, the import of Napoleon's fame,  
Such as we behind the despots shout.

Such as we could the old times return,  
Could the questions offer to our view  
The old meaning, short would our concern  
Be to guard this toleration new.  
Zeal for truth within our hearts would burn  
Such as burned on red Bartholomew.

And the human heart, the other side  
Of our compound nature, still we see,  
Gentle and devoted and the guide  
Still to acts of high humanity.  
Sydney and Saint Lewis and the bride  
Of Thrasêa in our lives may be.

Likings and aversions are our food;  
Reason is but savoured by the crowd;  
Feeling gives the motion to the blood,  
Whether vice or virtue call aloud.  
Still the features of the dragon brood  
Under all our innovations proud.

So these chasms where a strip of sky  
Shows far up to tell us of the day,  
Over which the steam goes floating by,  
Gold reflected from its feathery spray—  
Servant of the granite mountain high  
Now escaping in aerial play;

They who go on foot no more in dread  
Lest the horsemen crowd them to the wall;  
They who fast, munificently fed;  
Watchers to prevent the fire or brawl;  
Wealth in specious regulations led,  
And not openly tyrannical;

Are but dress wherein the unchanged man  
Seems of larger stature than his due.  
At his bidding swims leviathan,  
Giants hasten from the neighboring blue;  
Serves him many a secret artisan  
Whom his predecessors never knew.

Lay before him riches not his own,  
Build his palace like a gorgeous dream,  
Flatter him with fancies overgrown,  
As if he were now become supreme.  
Condescending from their distant throne,  
Come the Titans to his daring scheme.

---

Every age has its polaric thought,  
Round whose centre its conceptions turn;  
Unacknowledged, daily, nightly taught,  
All unconscious they who teach and learn.  
All the great are to its service brought;  
All successful lives its course discern.

Wealth is ours, our polar thought to-day,  
Centre of our system; there is none  
Place nor people but has felt the ray  
Of this fierce and stimulating sun,  
None who more than briefly can delay  
Down the new-established course to run.

The Time-Spirit of his many gifts  
Scatters Wealth among the nations all.  
Where the wand of his volition lifts,  
Showers of gold magnificently fall.  
Art, Religion, Warfare now are shifts,  
Substitutes for one above them all.

Always unappeasable, the past  
Surely saw this power less widely spread.  
Censure, to be sure, is on it cast;  
All the ages show a general dread;  
It cannot as colorless be classed  
Which so often enmity has bred

From the Hebrew prophets to the voice  
Of Rousseau. Yet were there others then,  
Other cults were offered to our choice,  
Other motives swayed the lives of men—  
Or is this a trick which Time employs  
Gilding an unlovely past again?

Surely the Unknown in many lands,  
The Unlike in many a striking way  
Made upon the spirit more demands,  
Kept the human Whole in fuller play.  
Wealth a formidable share commands,  
Is not thought of thoughts until to-day.

Pass the virtues of a simpler time,  
Now unsuited to our newer aim;  
Virtues of a grave and tranquil clime  
Where the character to fulness came,  
Where an agency, austere, sublime,  
Self-reliance was a steady flame.

Inwardness, the vital life within—  
Who regards it when about him flow  
Forms of matter, gorgeous, sovereign,  
As from Arab tales of long ago?  
Who so temperate but seeks to win  
Homage which such visitants bestow?

Wealth our god! We guard it, kiss its feet;  
Woe to him who lifts an impious hand.  
Up and down this Cyclopean street  
The machinery of life is planned  
That our faith, unquestioning, complete,  
Meet no witness from another land.

So these chasms where a strip of sky  
Shows far up to tell us of the day,  
O'er whose equal faces, mountain-high,  
Flashes of imprisoned lightning play  
When the fleeting winter sunbeams die,  
And the fighters still unyielding stay;

All this order, system, health, and air,  
More than these the City has to tell;  
These are useful, labor-saving, fair;  
Optimists unwearied on them dwell.  
Yet amid these friendly faces glare  
Unexpected presences of hell.

O'er the rights of man impend immense  
Rights of property and press him hard;  
Man reacts with all his vehemence,  
Calls his fellow-man to be his guard.  
Rise the billows of emotion tense,  
Flutter class-distinctions, battle-scarred.

Man may come to ask himself, aghast,  
Why this burden was upon him laid;  
Why this Wealth perversely was amassed  
Which has now the power to make afraid;  
What device, what composition vast,  
Can in intervention be assayed?

What division can produce content;  
What equality be equal long;  
What shall make majorities consent  
That the few shall be the rich and strong?  
How shall our unfeeling visitant  
Be advised of human right and wrong?

Thus the writers of Augustus' day  
Had a sense of man's more simple youth;  
Saw Rome's commerce stretching far away,  
Commerce fatal to the Roman truth;  
Saw in wealth a menace of decay  
Sweep without intelligence or ruth.

And shall we, who much more deeply see  
Into our inheritance of power,  
Fall as they because we cannot be  
Ready with the answer of the hour?  
Cannot cope with inequality,  
Regulate, dispense, the golden shower?

Deeper question hath not come to man  
Since from Cave environment he grew;  
At his bidding swims leviathan,  
Giants hasten from the neighboring blue;  
Serves him many a secret artisan  
Whom his predecessors never knew.

He shall answer in the years to come—  
Centuries shall serve to smooth his brow.  
(Could we see what errors shall succumb,  
Branded deep, they were surmounted now.)  
Answer often in delirium,  
Answer as he can; he recks not how.

Haply by some socialistic plan,  
Peaceable, or with a flag of red,  
He shall seek to change his fellow-man—  
"Ape and tiger," the Agnostic said.\*  
They who voice it, millenarian,  
Or the dupes cupidity has led.

\* Huxley's *Essays, Evolution and Ethics*.

Arrogantly turning from the past ;  
Yet what lesson in that crimson sea !  
Despots under many titles classed—  
King, republic, church, the favored three.  
Self-assertion ruthless to the last,  
Justice slow to come and quick to flee.

—But the present ! Men coöperate  
Even now in each commercial way ;  
Can we not compose the perfect state  
Out of these accustomed to obey ?  
Is not here a leaven to abate  
Carnage of the old barbaric day ?

Will not loss and wasted effort cease  
When competing units are no more ?  
Will not every happiness increase  
When fraternal love is daily lore ?  
Will not real equality release  
Human lives from heavy load they bore ?

So they hold who think that men become  
What laws bid them, who will not be taught  
What is true, though moralists be dumb  
And though flatterers obscure the thought—  
That ourselves, the human race in sum,  
Love the carnage and will yield it not.



Speak then : issue a supreme command.  
Level down until ambition die ;  
Make your changes with a sweeping hand ;  
Make a fact, a fact equality—  
It will perish like a house of sand  
When against its walls the breakers fly.

Self-assertion will renew its claim,  
Rolling back the stronger for its rout,  
Hailed as godlike by the masses tame,  
More adored that men have lived without—  
Lo, ascends a new Napoleon's fame,  
Such as we behind the despots shout.

Equal lives will never win regard  
Until equal gifts at birth endow ;  
Love will help, but hate will still retard,  
Interacting natures then as now :  
Test your system by these sayings hard,  
Ye who socialism's cause avow.

So these chasms where a strip of sky  
Shows far up to tell us of the day,  
Mighty structures where the heart beats high  
At their homage to our human clay,  
Where the congregated hundreds ply  
Through the marble-lined basilica—

Shall not blind us to the unchanged man,  
Accidents, prevailing customs new;  
Gaining, losing only but a span  
When we fix on him attentive view;  
Though to serve him swim leviathan,  
Giants hasten from the neighboring blue.

Yet how marvellous the City is  
In the glory of a cloudless day,  
When the sun o'er the declivities  
Of the southern sky is making way,  
And from out the tropic distances  
Floods this mighty street with golden ray!

The wide precincts hold the generous light,  
Each high-soaring cornice is its bound,  
Slower from these coasts it takes its flight  
Then from our low station on the ground.  
Far ahead, beyond the reach of sight,  
Is the hazy vista, purple-crowned.

Violet-crowned, though not as Athens was,  
Yet distinctive in thy time art thou  
As the cities, ancient, glorious,  
To whose long supremacy we bow—  
They whose names are written upon brass,  
They whose deeds humanity endow.

Though but yesterday from tutelage  
And for centuries eventful they,  
Thou art the exponent of the age,  
Fevered daughter of America!  
Thou shalt their astonishment engage,  
Draw their footsteps on thy daring way.

Not with toil alone thou dost proceed;  
With a certain fire thou art possessed.  
Thou hast joy in thy material creed,  
Dost expound it haply at its best.  
Buoyant as for some gigantic deed,  
To the van of cities thou has pressed.

And if man be still the unchanged man,  
If he have not gained in spite of all,  
Still he has his glimpse Elysian,  
Still from where he is he does not fall,  
Still within him on some wayward plan  
Voices of sublime direction call.

These have into spacious regions led  
Where his selfish profit doth not lie,  
Where with sense-excitement surfeited,  
He at last beholds Reality—  
("Ape and tiger," the Agnostic said:  
When they sleep is man's occasion high.)

Where the absolute is felt with joy  
As the blood-red presence of the Grail.  
They who kneel no single name employ;  
Beauty, Truth, and Love the most prevail.  
Thou, O City, whom the fiends decoy,  
Hast thy weapon like Sir Percivale.

Motives generous, exalted, true,  
Aspirations not to seem but be—  
Not to all, nor often to the few,  
Yet they come at times infallibly;  
Come and linger and depart anew  
When our hard necessities decree.

Some by power or fate may hold them fast,  
Have the gift by which their stay is won—  
Gift like his who in Disunion's blast  
Was successor to great Washington,  
Gift of Truth's austere enthusiast  
Under Arctic sky and polar sun.\*

Many are they, yet how few in all!  
Of the darkened multitude the eye;  
What is seen, is by their numbers small;  
Circumscribed the others live and die.  
Though adorned with prize material,  
Life's divinities have passed them by.

\* An allusion to Commodore Peary.

And of the Immortals where is found  
One which has such favor to bestow  
As the sense of Beauty, of whose ground  
Plato and his pupils long ago  
Held dispute in speech whose very sound  
Is a sweet and cadenced overflow.

Oh, eternal Beauty, what compares  
With thy permanence! The day may come  
When we shall replace with many cares  
Truth in her dilapidated home;  
When the doubts blown in on many airs  
Shall to some unthought-of word succumb.

When a helpful theory of life  
Shall again arise and have its hold  
In accepted facts, and not, at strife  
With these facts, assent grow slowly cold;  
When such reconcilements shall be rife  
As give Truth again her grandeur old.

We shall see that day how time has dealt  
With the broken temples of our god.  
Traces of old altars will be felt,  
Making wild distortions of the sod.  
Here Philosophy's strange offspring dwelt;  
Here Religion in red raiment trod.

But with Beauty, nought is to forget—  
Nought at least since sacred Greece arose,  
Her discoverer and the standard set  
Whose unchanging light forever glows,  
Always an incitement, a regret,  
A delight which time cannot depose.

They who find and feel her, point the way  
To a sense of unity in things,  
To a scheme of values which no day  
Of discredit into chaos brings,  
Which has scarce an element of clay,  
But as undescended knowledge springs.

Poems and persons, flowers, the light of snow,  
Stars and grasses and the sculptured form;  
Clouds and water in its onward flow,  
Aspects of the summer sea and storm;  
These are of the army which the slow,  
Patient force of time cannot deform.

---

Such thy weapons, City, for the fight  
With the ape and tiger force in man.  
Never shalt thou lapse to such a night,  
To such blackness more than Stygian,  
That they will not help thee to the light,  
Bring thee back to where thy fall began.

If thou usest them but little, ah,  
Then the harder shall thy bondage be.  
Not by marble-lined basilica,  
Not by wealth, though ten-fold in degree,  
Not by force of economic law,  
Shalt thou gain the freedom of the free.

Shalt not gain what permanent survives,  
Makes for good the human story through—  
Lo, where man confronts his many lives,  
Slowly moves his strange experience through,  
Humbled often, he again revives;  
Undismayed, his hopes the future woo.

## OFF VIAREGGIO

1822

WHAT were the moments of that fatal hour  
When from Livorno's port with farewell shout,  
Borne like a seabird on the tempest's power,  
The "Don Juan" stood out?

Was Williams at the helm? And Shelley's face,  
Where was it turned—to book or shore or sea,  
Or glancing light to note the storm-cloud's pace  
Which quickened on their lee  
And made against the boat a stealthy race  
For distant Lerici?

The vast and marble-crested Apennine  
Was on their right that sultry summer's day,  
Old battlemented keeps the shore define,  
The watchers of the bay.

With swift, impatient sail they fled afar;  
The moon, the evening wind, the terrace white,  
Jane, with her artless music and guitar,  
Return again to-night.

O baneful vision, dulling their concern  
For skilful seamanship! The mutter low  
Of thunder did but welcome their return  
With friendly voice they know.



Out of the south it spoke, and their reply  
Was the rash topsail spread upon the blue!  
Across the century one sends a sigh  
For this unpractised crew.

A shade crept o'er the sun now scarce so clear,  
Changes appeared upon the purple sea;  
But they whom memorable change was near  
Sped in security.

His eager gaze was to the last alive  
To Nature's meaning and unchanging love,  
He watched the waves in sparkling legions drive,  
Or smiled on heaven above;

Or saw, in visions of enchantment dressed,  
The thronging spirits of the deep and sky  
Inviting him to leave his hopeless quest  
And join their company.

The Spirit of the Hour came in his car,  
A youth of ardent eyes and headlong speed,  
Approaching like some day-arisen star  
Whose course we do not heed.

And like the hues of morning were the wings  
Of those who ministered about his flight,  
And at his hand the joyful lightning springs  
In panoply of white.

Out of the caverns of impatient sea,  
From halls where orange tangle shuts the day,  
The beings of the deep delightedly  
Rise to the Spezzian Bay.

Tumultuous, they would the master claim,  
The spiritual parent and the child  
Shall rush together like wind-driven flame,  
Or lovers reconciled.

Alas, it was more cruel, the attack  
Of forces inaccessible to ruth;  
Yet they have kept this lovely figure back  
In everlasting youth.

Still shines upon us from his lofty page  
Something of morning freshness bright and free,  
Which had departed in maturer age,  
Or failed increasingly.

For such as Shelley wither at the touch  
Of life's realities, and we had seen  
A poet noteworthy, yet changed how much  
From what his youth had been.

Perhaps with pall of pity crept the storm  
On careless watchers bent upon their home.  
The sea was still; the air oppressive, warm;  
The sky a leaden dome.

Then fell the tempest and the warring shock  
Of whirlwind and of wave, the blinding strife.  
Who perished first? Did Shelley seek to block  
The closing gates of life?

Or did he, as he said in days before,  
Feel that his life was valueless to man,  
And that the future held for him in store  
But oft-defeated plan?

For none would read his word nor hear his voice,  
And dimmer grew his confidence to slay  
Established wrong, and he could not rejoice  
In vacant holiday.

He lived for those Realities unknown  
To men of a less spiritual sense,  
And felt himself more humanly alone  
On each new eminence.

And in this solitude most skilled he grew  
To grace abstractions with celestial love.  
Not golden Plato more divinely knew  
Their verity to prove.

Freedom of mind was of his glorious lore,  
The unforced love of others, and the might  
Of Beauty as her rainbow pinions soar  
Across the realms of night.

And he was drowned! And not a voice will tell  
The secret of that stealthy fog bank dim!  
Heroic lessons in such moments dwell,  
The end of one like him.

Of this be certain—he who evermore  
Asked of the silence for its deepest word,  
Veiled not his face when on the Umbrian shore  
The voice of death was heard.

I think in calmness, with a hope perchance  
Of all his place should through the ages be—  
A standard bearer proud in Truth's advance—  
He drank the bitter sea.

Unselfish and unworldly to the heart,  
What though his words were immature and wild,  
His view of life instructive but in part,  
Obscure, unreconciled?

These are for those who love him, who have felt  
His presence deep within their fondest  
thought—

As when across a desert's burning belt  
The song of birds is brought;

Or when one breathes for days in some small  
space

And feels the preciousness of light and air,  
And then is led where the blue waters race  
Upon a seabeach bare.

## DOGWOOD AND AZALEA

BELOVED, yesterday I saw the flowers  
Appear again along the forest ways,  
I heard the wood thrush with unlesened powers  
Utter the sweet and contemplative lays.

Once more the sun puts forth his May-time  
strength,  
The oak leaves open and the maple's fruit—  
The clustered dark red keys—fall off at length,  
And dandelion stalks the claim dispute

Of beauty which the golden blossoms made  
A week ago in their completed prime;  
So gracefully the seed-balls are displayed,  
And make for us a second flowering-time.

Do you remember how the dogwood stood,  
Thrilling with snowy light against the sky,  
The gracious queen of the ungrudging wood,  
The *ne plus ultra* of each passerby?

And far the wild azalea sent  
Its fragrant message to the eager bee,  
And soft its rose-pink clusters blent  
Into its neighbor's silver panoply.

The graceful grasses, bending to the ground;  
The light or shadow, as the sun-god bids;  
It seemed a fabled glade, where might abound  
The golden apples of the Hesperids.

Or starting from this thicket on the right,  
Hylas the glorious Argive youth might come,  
Bearing his water-vase of metal bright,  
Nearing with steps intent the Naiad's home.

Fair, floating shapes of Grecian legend born,  
Glowing with human warmth in flower and  
stream,  
Though Pan be from his ancient covert torn,  
Your feet still linger and your eyes still beam.

Ye add the charm of happy, wayward hearts  
To Nature's process, uniform and stern.  
We watched, while sunset from the day departs,  
The pink and white to even grayness turn.

---

So stand they now, strong in the light of May,  
Charged with the spirit of the perfect spring—  
They cannot miss, these children of a day,  
The eyes which once beheld their blossoming.

They cannot miss the touch which, by its love,  
Seems almost present even here and now;  
To them each voice is mute save where above  
The redstart sings upon the chestnut bough.

Yet eyes and voice and touch a year ago  
Made themselves felt within this pleasant wood;  
The drifting petals of this tree of snow  
Mark light the sacred spot whereon she stood.

Whereon she stood and gladdened at the sight  
Opening to-day on my dejected eyes.  
I come to gather clusters pink and white  
And bear them to the hillside where she lies.

## A CREED

IN our dual nature, constant fellows—  
Side by side, although with discords deep;  
As the morning skyline where it yellows,  
Showing dark and bright there, too, as fellows—  
Spirits strong, alternate watches keep.

One, the foe of first interpretations,  
Sceptic, Pyrrhonist, and sad or gay,  
Sees in life no permanent relations,  
Superficial all interpretations  
Which would give our spirits to the day.

Sees no tear upon the cosmic faces,  
Nothing deeper than a fitting smile  
As they turn on us who look for traces,  
Mad for something human in their faces,  
Some disclosure for our storm-swept isle.

Grief is purposeless and has no lesson;  
Joy is well, but leaves no kinder heart;  
Moral aims are matters to digress on;  
Life yields truly but one honest lesson—  
Force, the secret which her lips impart.

Renan-like, beware, lest quite misguided  
Into attitudes too stern and set,  
Life turn short and leave you quite derided—  
Bitter thought to be so long misguided,  
Find imposters have your eyes made wet.



Certainty but seems ; the wise man's station,  
Self-reliant, far above the crowd,  
Holding with their thoughts no deep relation,  
All things much alike from his high station,  
Nothing dark nor bright, nor faint nor loud.

“Nay, what man *feels*, that is all-important ;  
At its source must be celestial fire ;  
There is truth, the rest is but discordant  
Variation from the all-important :  
Wise are they who by this path aspire.

“We have insight straight into our being ;  
We have sense direct of precious things ;  
We have beauty only for the seeing ;  
Love within our cold and alien being  
Sheds the glory of his rainbow wings.

“By our deep, imperious intuitions  
Truths are shown we cannot go beneath ;  
Back from Reason's fruitless expeditions  
Comes mankind to seek his intuitions,  
Casting down the mind's dishonored wreath.

“Back to knowledge simple, elemental,  
Joys instinctive, teachings of the heart ;  
Knowledge such as children have whose mental  
Cravings need not but the elemental,  
Listen only to emotion's part.

“Back to what we feel in summer noontime  
In a shady meadow, with the blue  
Clustered lupine flowers in heat of June-time,  
While above, and fainter for the noontime,  
Comes the black-throat warbler’s lisp anew.

“Back to what we feel when, after parting,  
One we love is by our side again;  
Slow the strangeness passes, and upstarting,  
Comes a sense of perfect peace, and parting  
Now seems poverty as well as pain.

“Trace them boldly to their inmost essence,  
Show their origin, obscure and vile,  
Show that selfishness maintained their presence,  
Show them like all else in deepest essence—  
None the less like April flowers they smile.

“None the less they lift their lovely faces,  
Fragrant and aglow with tender light;  
Nothing there of winter’s blackening traces,  
Only spring’s sweet promise in their faces,  
Coming bird songs and the orchards white.”

Intuition speaks, and then exalted:  
“Surely my pure voice shall be the guide.  
Reason’s every covenant defaulted,  
Justly cast from out his place exalted,  
Let him wait me, humble at my side.

"Let light break!" And starting from the  
basis

That if man be such, the world must be;  
Far and wide she spreads the green oasis,  
Makes us systems on a slender basis;  
Makes Religion and Philosophy.

Reads into the world man's moral longing;  
Tasks faint Reason like a beaten slave;  
Bids him forth, whatever foes are thronging,  
Bids him of the sacred moral longing  
Be upholder and protector brave.

Takes no thought of inborn opposition:  
"Side by side, although with discords deep":  
Places but a foe in high position,  
Who will undermine by opposition  
All the structure he was charged to keep.

Who, with great and growing disaffection,  
Sneers well masked in an obsequious smile,  
Strikes the blows which pierce through all  
protection;  
Rises into open disaffection;  
Shouts his war cry, who was slave awhile.

Rushes with his host of fierce aggressors  
Right against the structure which he made;

Routs in flight the somnolent possessors;  
Guides with torch and sword the fierce  
aggressors;  
Leaves no secret corner unbetrayed:

Leaves a ruin. Ever backward, forward,  
Constant strife and struggle, far and wide;  
Overwhelming waves come sweeping shoreward,  
Flood man's spirit, drive it back or forward,  
Yet the great dualities abide.

Still abide, and ever through the ages  
Arrogate dominion in their turn—  
Reason makes a desert in her rages,  
Intuition our despair assuages  
Till her cloud-born structures overturn.

Which is deeper, which is truer? Answered  
Be the question, be a mark deep set,  
Set so strong its place cannot be transferred,  
High as if the mighty Pillars answered  
Those who questioned how the oceans met.

Oh, an answer! Darkly, sadly,  
Comes the word back—ye shall never know.  
Herakles is dead, whose foot went gladly  
Where the faint and wretched labored sadly;  
None since him can strike a conquering blow.

None can raise those pillars of the spirit,  
Set a mark which all the world can see,  
Give us peace our children shall inherit,  
Tranquillize the undecided spirit,  
Read this riddle of eternity.

Both seem true,—within our dual being  
Fellow-masters with alternate sway;  
Lictors, fasces move at his decreeing  
Who gives law that moment in our being,  
His great peer secluded far away.

Reason as we will, what makes life dearest  
Still is ours beyond his chilling breath;  
And our love and insight at their clearest  
Cannot spread the circle of life's dearest,  
Change the face of outrage, pain, and death.

Cannot see ourselves, our soul's real essence,  
Anywhere within the scheme of things;  
Cannot see the purpose of its presence,  
Find a place for its transcendent essence  
In the dust from which the cosmos springs.

Cannot make within our dual being  
Harmonies of feeling and of thought—  
Voices clear yet ever disagreeing  
Bring their discord to our troubled being,  
Bring our brief tranquillity to naught.

Unafraid to meet the contradiction,  
Resolute to comprehend it all,  
Yet not feel it as a last affliction  
Which by its malignant contradiction  
Taints the wine of life with bitter gall,

Is the task the gods have set before us,  
Glancing downward with a flitting smile.  
Let us join not in the servile chorus  
Reaching up, but rather turn before us  
Where of men majestic forms defile.

Where antiquity has left examples  
Of the spirit tempered to endure;  
Beautiful and simple as her temples,  
Somber in their truthfulness—examples  
Still of great convictions high and pure.

From the strong, reliant, Roman nature  
Steady voices rise for our relief.  
Fortitude they knew in every feature;  
Made it very one with their own nature;  
Wrote its truths in blood on many a leaf.

Wrote it where, with grave and golden pageant,  
Great Lucretius' verses march along;  
Wrote it in the beautiful and plangent  
Prose where Tacitus sets forth the pageant  
Of his country's self-inflicted wrong.

Still be ours the pagan sense of nearness  
To the ways of pain which never fail;  
Still be ours the joyousness, the clearness  
Of Cyrene, and the sunny nearness  
To experience in all detail.

Stoics on one side, but on the other,  
Cherishers of life's allotted space;  
All that Art and Nature, the great mother,  
Through our feelings give us on the other—  
Turn to meet it with a smiling face.

All unselfishness in man or woman,  
All that moral loveliness has wrought—  
Mortal though it be, of lifetime human,  
Now and here receive it, man and woman;  
Take the flowers without the second thought.

Take the flowers, and if they be not fairer,  
Know the travail life contains for all.  
Each in higher things would be a sharer,  
Each would make his daily pathway fairer,  
Each sustain where now he does but fall.

Each would see, but trifles are insistent;  
Each would aid, but habit holds him fast;  
Each would feel, but selfishness resistant  
Parallels his sympathy insistent,  
Fronts his present with his arid past.

Man is what the gods of life have made him.  
If his moral glory be but small,  
Weak the armor in which they arrayed him;  
Blunted soon or broken sword has made him  
Selfish, servile, would he live at all.

Beauty, Knowledge, Art, and the Great  
Mother—

Seize the world of joy they bring to hand.  
Nature with her riches like no other,  
Though she feel not, fascinating mother;  
Sibylline, yet of a splendor grand.

Myriads obey our deepest longing,  
Give us beauty more than eye can see,  
Gifts for all, no supplication wronging,  
Gifts which satisfy our fullest longing,  
Animate our highest constancy.

Stoics on one side, but there remaineth  
On the other all experience new,  
Flood whose ever-sparkling tide containeth  
Joy for whoso on its waves remaineth  
To the soul-accorded values true.

Have we gained upon them, have we wandered  
From the men whose fame once shook the earth?  
From the order Rome and Hellas pondered  
Have our artificial ages wandered  
Into ways sometimes of lesser worth?



None knew better than the Greek how freely  
This great problem should be seen and met;  
Close to life and health, but on the stelé  
See how calm he stands, and freely  
Turns to death with disciplined regret.

Conscious in his heart of gods who downward  
Glance a moment with a flitting smile;  
Conscious, too, of olive-groves which townward  
Reach the gates, of purple skies which  
downward  
Shed their sweetness on his little isle.

LUCRETIUS  
THE ROMAN AGNOSTIC

THE tints of morn, though faint, have beauties  
in their kind—

The pale sea-green, the rose which deepens into  
dun,

The blackness and the lifelessness of earth,  
save where we find

Dim in the east the promise of the rising sun.

And they who wake and watch throughout the  
night,

Weary of the Cimmerian darkness almost to  
despair,

Are hushed to thoughts of hope, and turning to  
the light,

Cry that at length the day will soon be there.

Thou wast of those who symbolize the day.

A wisdom new thou would'st impart to man;

Would'st teach him to adore, though but of  
clay,

A human reading of the cosmic plan.

Would'st give man reason in himself to trust,

Careless of gods, inactive on their throne;

Would'st lift his head, long prostrate in the  
dust,

And arm him with the intellect alone.

The intellect for thee! And bravely done!  
The spirit's force was spent; advance lay now  
Where durable indemnity is won—  
In the mind's free, unconquerable vow.

In a conception of the Truth which gives  
Nought to emotion's importuning tear,  
Which in a more sublime dimension lives,  
Inexorably noble and severe.

Man is no more the one productive clue,  
The final cause whose life or death explain;  
From Nature start about him rivals new  
Where they so long invisible have lain.

Sprung of a common substance with us, they  
Are of our kindred in this span of time.  
The earth, the sky, the deep, the night, the  
day—  
We, like the rest, mechanic laws obey,  
Like them are factors in a whole sublime.

The synthesis of Science! None has felt  
Its scope, its sweep, Lucretius, more than thou;  
None has more grandly with its vision dealt,  
No prophet more convinced from then till now.

The Void's black areas receive the light  
Of thy supreme, impassioned love of Truth.

Where atoms old are ranging infinite,  
Thy page discourses with the fire of youth.

If man be but an unimportant part,  
If care of him be nowhere in the deeps—  
Then be it his to discipline his heart,  
Rally the strength which undistinguished  
    sleeps.

Confront the world, courageous and alone,  
Dependent now and always on his will;  
In freedom and in self-reliance grown,  
Upon a higher plane be happy still.

Such loyalty impersonal was thine!  
And they who would inquiry abate,  
Who would the ardent intellect confine,  
Receive the message of thy clear-eyed hate.

The voices which of superstition born  
Are wrought within the daily life we live,  
Lucretius scatters with imperious scorn,  
As follies of a stamp superlative.

The fear of what beyond the grave may be,  
The spectre of impending heavenly wrath,  
The danger of perverse impiety—  
All, all, are driven headlong from thy path.

For man's Religion was to thee the cause  
Of his abased and impotent career;  
The enemy of those eternal laws  
Which to serene intelligence appear;  
A burden man with painful effort draws  
In struggling upward to a higher sphere.

In Wisdom's temple far removed to dwell,  
And unto golden words commit a ray  
Which shall caprice and accident repel  
And bring a settled order to the day—

A noble enterprise and nobly done!  
It might be in this strange complex of life  
Too long a course the intellect might run,  
Too absolutely terminate the strife.

Too far its action might proceed, too far  
Our confidence increase in what we see,  
And Reason with scholastic method bar  
The road to veritable sanity.

The logical too long might be the only way,  
Life be immersed in uninspired themes,  
Matter and Force the universe array,  
And stifled all the spirit's lovely dreams.

Far, far from thee, Lucretius, such a fear;  
Severer study was to thee the goal;

Nor could one such as thou be made to hear  
That mind, that intellect, was not the whole.

Roman good sense and pure Athenian grace  
Meet on his page; the path winds fair  
Through flowery vale, o'er mountain with its  
    rugged face,  
High in the frigid air.

Clear brooks refresh us, and upon the isle  
Of Sicily the surging waters flow;  
From many a verse do gentle faces smile  
And mitigate the granite, fire and snow.

Poet of the infinite! Thy figure dim  
Is of heroic magnitude to me;  
Thy composition is a mighty hymn,  
A high apostrophe to Liberty!

The freedom of the mind to thee was life;  
No prison, though luxurious, was gain.  
Thy genius has immortalized the strife  
Of those who would sincerity attain.

Something thou owest to thy country's mood:  
The drift of atoms ever old and young,  
The vastness and eternal solitude,  
Befit the grandeur of the Latin tongue.

So that, although a Greek before thee wrote  
And Epicurus old the system made,  
It comes not to us as a voice remote,  
A reminiscence of the Attic shade;

A voice we chiefly prize for what it tells  
Of the far greater voices now no more—  
Such faint infusion of immortal wells  
As Horace brought us from the Lydian shore—

But native to the Roman stern and deep  
The cadences unconscious and sublime,  
The league which brevity and pathos keep,  
The iron phrase, indifferent to Time.

## DOGWOOD

THIS year the dogwood trees are full,  
Although the dust is deep for May;  
And columbines in vases cool  
Scatter their petals in a day.

And all about the brooks are stilled,  
Or whisper where their voice was strong,  
And corn-blades in the planted field  
Have barely to the surface sprung.

The catbird's nesting song o'erflows,  
The buttercups are passing by,  
And oak leaves change their tender rose  
And speed to green maturity.

And all the dogwood trees are full  
In this not quite propitious May,  
When drooping in the scanty pool  
The cowslip flowers were loth to stay.

Four summers since the trees like this  
Were laden with great perfect flowers,  
Their memory from Time's abyss  
Returns to me in distant hours.

For one was gone who loved to see  
The flowers of May enrich her room,  
And I would bring them carefully—  
Polygala's magenta bloom;



Or painted cup from low, wet ground;  
Or lupine from one chosen spot;  
Or wild azalea, which is found  
In forest jungles dense and hot,

Or in the woods of higher land—  
Growths of young oak and chestnut bowers—  
Where tanagers their nests have planned;  
And lady-slippers with strange flowers

Are rising on their long green stalks  
(Once in a place but little known,  
In one of my successful walks  
I found them where the morning shone

On hundreds gathered at my feet)—  
And where the ovenbird's loud cry  
Rises through all the noonday heat  
With unexpected melody.

And this was thought the best of all;  
The wild azalea was but seen  
To make the rest before it fall  
Humbled a little in their mien.

The soft pink blossoms on the blue;  
The tender foliage, sun-immersed;  
The stately height at which it grew;  
The honey in its petals nursed

Which made the air about so sweet  
That butterflies rest here and there  
Upon the blossoms, and the fleet  
Wild bees are searching for their share

Deep in the trumpet-fashioned flowers.  
A constant insect hum surrounds  
With voice of contemplative hours.  
And clusters which beyond the bounds

Reach up and are supremely *graced*  
With clear, pale pink against the sky,  
Although upon a background placed  
Of fortunate *affinity*,

These, compassed by the May sun's power,  
Show but a hue of fainter red;  
While others, which their fate made lower  
And with the forest leaves o'erspread,

Are dark and rich and colored deep,  
Deep as the ruby's slumbering flame,  
Or as the diamond's red leap  
Forth from a surface white and tame.

Or like the red which comes and goes  
In an old Persian rug of price,  
Where lotus flowers stand in rows  
Of green and blue, a known device

Long sanctioned in the weavers' homes,  
Tabriz, Kazak and Kirmanshah,  
And copied on rough Tartar looms  
Whose owners still their substance draw

From flocks and herds in Turkestan.  
And round the field of warm, rich red  
Thus lotus-strown, the artisan  
Has many narrow borders led,

And one is always white. Although  
The words which would connect in thought  
A stone, a rug, constructions slow  
And lifeless, with the marvels taught

By flowers which blossomed yesterday,  
Whose texture seems so fresh and new,  
And near us in a human way—  
Are more conventional than true.

And shafts of scattered sunbeams came  
Down through the overhanging leaves,  
And made them things without a name  
For glory, so the color weaves,

The fresh, green color with the gold  
Of the sun's light, a sylvan spell,  
Recalling vaguely feelings old,  
Submerged and inexpressible.

The dearest things in life are vague  
And inexpressible, and flee  
The reason's analytic plague  
And all self-conscious scrutiny.

And though here is but sunlight shed  
On leaves new-opened, blue of May  
In fitful glimpses, and a bed  
Of amber shadows on the way;

Yet in the heart they stir a deep  
And dim remembrance like a law  
Of young experience roused from sleep;  
And consciousness essays to draw

Out of the past the wonder old  
Of Beauty as man saw her first,  
A scanty vision, seldom told,  
Which left him some diviner thirst.

As if on such a day in spring,  
Shadow and sunlight such as these  
Assisted man's awakening  
In far remote societies.

Gave him encouragement to say  
That, hidden in the world of sense,  
There winds a spiritual way  
On unexplored magnificence.

The gold transmuted, showering down  
In curves and tracings at our feet  
Of shy and enigmatic brown,  
Some distant past repeat.

And thus it seemed the best of all,  
The wild azalea sweet and high,  
Each flower of spring became its thrall,  
And lived beneath a paler sky  
Until a day, which I recall,  
Fatal to its supremacy.

A May-time day, when columbines  
Clustered beneath the apple trees  
Of an old orchard, whose faint lines  
The unused eye can barely seize

As one comes to it in a wood,  
Stretching away without a mark  
Of any human neighborhood  
In all its depth of leafy dark.

For thick the forest guests had come—  
Cedar and birch—within the space  
Of the old orchard's settled home.  
The wall which once enclosed the place

Had disappeared, or all about  
Lay scattered here and there. A pine,  
Just where the path came, stood without,  
Impenetrable, saturnine.

And underneath it there were strown  
Red, matted needles on which grew—  
The territory all their own  
And no competitor in view—

The masses of wild lily, green,  
Which love the deep, abundant shade  
Of pines, and many a dusky scene  
Into a vivid one have made.

And where the little blossoms now  
Stand modestly with odor faint,  
And shining leaves in armies bow,  
Stretching away with likeness quaint—  
An army, which with silent vow,  
Would keep the place from outer taint.

This was without the ruined wall;  
The path turned here, one straight could see  
That through the forest border tall  
Did lie another polity.

Within were ancient apple trees,  
Now quite run wild. Dead branches black  
Deform them, and societies  
Of strong and wasteful shoots attack

The hard pressed exiles. Not in vain  
The many lichens hold each limb  
With close and suffocating chain  
Of unrelenting purpose dim.

Yet there were branches fresh of leaf,  
Rising to meet the sun and air,  
Glowing in their possession brief.  
A short, green grass grew everywhere,

Not like the carpet on the ground  
Of the near forest—here had been  
A place where cultivation found  
In early days a home serene.

There was a charm about the spot  
Which made one push his tangled way  
About its confines, long forgot,  
Though once in such a smiling day

Its progress was a care to men;  
Its blossoms, which a week ago  
Fell to the ground in snowy rain,  
Could then intelligence bestow

Of coming fruit in autumn near,  
Or dearth when blossoms were but few—  
A thing of weight to hope or fear.  
The yellow-flowered barberries grew

In great, deep thickets where the thrush  
Fluttered and danced and sang his song,  
Pouring it out with headlong rush  
As if the story still were long,

And short the hours when he could sing.  
A mocker is he, yet with truth,  
With truth he made the orchard ring,  
The joyous hardihood of youth.

Adventure hovered all about,  
And preparation for some new  
And joyful knowledge which, without  
Effort or wasting toil, a clue

To broader happiness might give;  
To vision raised a step above  
The former scheme diminutive;  
To what might shape itself and prove,

Perhaps, though but in small degree,  
An answer to explain the show  
Of poisonous happenings we see,  
And make in harmony to flow



Beauty and life, now so apart.  
Each man must wander forth alone,  
And feel his way and make his chart  
And toil until his strength be gone

For that which will for him unite  
The whole and give to it some air  
Of reason. And to his delight,  
In epoch-making moments rare,

Insight comes to him and he sees  
A little farther—some great book  
Gives him an impulse, or he frees  
His spirit by a happy look

At mighty sculpture which the Greeks  
Have left to us; perhaps some flower  
Just at the needed moment speaks  
And sends him on with fuller power.

And so it was that spring-time day  
Four years ago. Although I knew  
The dogwood long before, and may  
Affirm not an experience new

In all its parts, yet never then  
Was it the flower I looked on now;  
But smaller, more the denizen  
Of common woods, and could endow

No looker-on with added hope,  
Nor make him on the instant feel  
Beauty's importance, and the scope  
And spaciousness her truths reveal.

And which, though lightly held, are still,  
Perhaps, the stablest truths of life.  
Insect or partial blight would chill  
The petals; pierce with tiny knife

Their texture; make the edges curl;  
And give an almost wasted look  
To what were else as white as pearl,  
Or foam upon a headlong brook;

And neutralize each special grace.  
But that was dogwood of a year  
Seeming far-distant—face to face,  
I read a new experience here.

Perhaps it was the mass of flowers,  
Clothing with white a forest tree;  
Perhaps I loved the golden showers  
Of sunlight falling silently.

Perhaps the simpleness of shape;  
The four white petals, uniform  
And yet distinctive as the grape,  
Whose fragrance from a thicket warm

Is blown to us in middle June.  
And in the centre where they meet—  
Still with the other hues in tune,  
And resting on a snowy seat—

Rises a cluster prominent  
Of rounded bosses which are now  
Of a soft green and will consent  
To yellow when the days allow.

And all the flowers were opened wide,  
Superb, expanded on each spray,  
With scarce a leaf to stay the tide,  
The splendor of the star of day!

A glorious tree! Completeness there  
Such as these eyes have seldom seen;  
Henceforth it lives in changeless air,  
Established in the mind's demesne.

Perhaps I loved the onward flight  
Up to the blue and neighboring sky,  
Where every little point was bright  
With that deep azure which is nigh

To life, one thinks, when near the sun  
It seems to palpitate and wave—  
Or rather it was all in one,  
The overwhelming moments gave

Such affluence of that strange sense  
Which seems to bear the gazer on  
With soul of happy prescience—  
A moment of Perfection.

Perfect! oh surely, here to-day  
In golden sunlight and within  
The faint reflected green of May  
From trees about their sovereign.

And with another color yet—  
Upon each petal's edge a mark  
Of wine-red purple richly set,  
Which from below is nearly dark

Until we reach and take the flowers  
And hold them nearer, then we know  
This place has had surpassing powers,  
This orchard where the forests grow.

And through it one has passed a door  
And come to knowledge of a tie  
Between things not allied before,  
A stage upon the theory

Which though imperfect, was the best  
Which honesty would let us hold;  
And therefore has the day been blest  
And worthy of a mark of gold.

I think it is not shape and hue  
Which give to flowers their greatest charm;  
Colors are many, red and blue,  
From which the heart takes no alarm

And impetus for tenderness  
And cherishing. It is the life  
Combined with beauty's various dress  
Which brings the still-recurring strife

Of love within us, like a pain  
Almost, for flowers. They seem akin,  
Possessed of feeling, will, and brain  
In some degree, yet with no sin

Of disaffection towards us. They  
Have not one struggling wish to set  
Against our egotistic sway,  
But seem the same when mornings wet

Their petals or when noon is high.  
They grow for us and never swerve  
In their allegiance till they die,  
And others come and live and serve.

For this we pay them gratitude;  
Not that they really are unlike,  
Exempt from the compulsion rude  
Which bids the strongest tear and strike;

But because we are not informed  
Of their hostilities; and see  
Only their beauty undeformed,  
And life all innocent and free;

And use it for our spirit's sake;  
Take from it aspiration pure—  
Life constantly alert, awake,  
Beauty unmatched and conduct sure.

## KNOWLEDGE

REALITY, who dost not die  
Once thou art born,  
Thou hidden splendor in the sky  
Of darkest morn!

Adored by those who still would dwell  
Aloof, above,  
To thee unconquerably swell  
The tides of love.

A love which does not actuate  
To worldly gain—  
That Sadducee, importunate  
And sovereign.

A love no lower lives suggest,  
No steps control;  
A trait of what we once possessed—  
The human soul.

How to describe it? It is thirst  
To look, to see,  
Where all is meaningless at first,  
A unity.

To follow unrewarded toil  
Without a sigh;  
To bid despair itself recoil  
Composedly.

To win a step and then to lose;  
As in the dark,  
Direction, distance to confuse  
Until a spark

We see and by degrees retain—  
A guiding clue  
Which leads us back to things again  
With insight new.

Then, lo, are likenesses revealed  
Unseen before,  
The kingdoms of confusion yield  
A province more.

Nay, yield it partly, half return,  
Half go, half stay—  
A feigned withdrawal! We discern  
Not yet the day.

Another unity than this,  
A stricter bond,  
Other and other likenesses,  
Still lie beyond.

Whether we would the thought embrace  
Of Greece or Rome,  
And with the masters of the race  
Become at home;



Or if we would the ways assign  
And scope of Art,  
Or the deep mystery divine  
Of Nature's heart—

How slow, O Knowledge, thy advance!  
How far before  
Thy steps our eager wishes glance,  
Our eyes explore!

Thy cult is of the things of eld;  
Thy name was sung  
Or deep in his possession held  
When man was young.

Knowledge still lured him like a flame.  
Chaldæan eyes  
Charted the planets as they came  
Across the skies.

Egypt and India sought thee long.  
The mind, the soul,  
They schooled in exercises strong;  
But more control

Of thy deep impulse none could boast  
Than they who crowned  
The blue Ægean's utmost coast  
With temples round.

Thou art austere, nor dost relent.  
With careless eye  
Thou seest thine adherents spent  
Unsparingly.

Invisible to many a prayer,  
Thou dost prefer  
Among the steadfast here and there  
A worshipper.

The rest shall never see thy face,  
Great sovereign!  
The love, the labor, all the grace  
They e'er shall win.

For thine is Nature's wastefulness.  
A hundred come,  
And two or three thy thought express;  
The rest are dumb.

Yet are the dumb of service true—  
Their purpose high  
An influence which aids the few  
To victory.

**LINES ON A PICTURE  
 "THE PROPHECY"**

(Representing Jesus Seated Alone by the Lake of  
 Galilee.)

La loi devient l'hiéroglyphe;  
 Toujours l'ombre au jour succéda;  
 Moïse, hélas! produit Caïphe,  
 Christ engendre Torquemada!

Hugo.

THE blue sea sparkles at his very feet,  
 The golden sunlight floods him from on high,  
 Pure is the air and soft the grassy seat—  
 Why clouds his troubled eye?

The joyous village-folk have all withdrawn,  
 Their lame to walk, their blind again to see;  
 A solemn silence steeps this hillside lawn  
 And shore of Galilee.

A welcome silence, O thou wearied heart,  
 Thou watcher in a calm not all thine own.  
 For once he falters in his chosen part,  
 And spurns the bread of stone.

And looking out on this unfettered lake,  
 He seeks the mute companionship which springs  
 From restless water with its rush and break  
 And random wanderings.

The careless cities of the sunny coast  
Have lightly looked or smiling passed him by,  
As if an idle juggler's were his boast  
Of spells that climb the sky

And call the dead to life, or bid increase  
A loaf or fish until they will sustain  
The hosts of followers who crave release  
From hunger in his train.

Words of reproach are on his trembling lips:  
"Chorazin and Bethsaida, woe to ye!"  
Out o'er the water where the white sail dips  
He hurls the prophecy.

"Had Tyre and Sidon seen such wonders, they  
Had been convinced, though of an alien land;  
Accursed be such obtuseness on the day,  
The day now near at hand."

Thus oft have sat the teachers of their kind,  
Absorbed, despondent, where no watcher sees;  
Thus brooded o'er their thoughts with bitter  
mind  
Buddha and Socrates.

Some, perhaps, came renewed from such an  
hour,  
And learned their vision in a form to shape  
Of speech so luminous it had the power  
Few hearers could escape.

While others grew more inward and intense,  
Less qualified to make their meaning clear,  
Accepting fact and fiction with no sense  
Of difference severe.

We turn the pages where thy tale is told,  
Seeking with effort frank to understand,  
Groping through metaphors to reach the gold  
Passed down from hand to hand.

To find the vital purpose of thy heart,  
To learn what truth it was thou wouldest say,  
What secret thou wast laboring to impart,  
What guiding force obey.

What was it all about—this light or dark  
Of parable, abruptly harsh or mild,  
This anger at a question near the mark,  
This logic of a child,

This strange reluctance to explain the thought,  
As if its value might be less secure?—  
Here are components which will ne'er be  
brought  
Into agreement sure.

Perhaps because a love of paradox  
Possessed him and he had the mystic's zeal  
For veiled expression, which so often locks  
The thought it would reveal.

Or was his vision ever quite the same  
From day to day? Perhaps the truth may be  
That the words faithfully proclaim  
Jesus' perplexity.

And that the contradictions of his speech,  
Which gather into volume as we read,  
Show the real mind of one who could but teach  
An uncompleted creed.

Or has the message come to us confused  
By those who heard it—peasants not adept  
In passing on the images he used  
With all their meaning kept?

Or has it been distorted in the years  
Of oral transfer, like a gloomy sea  
Which stretch themselves before the tale  
                  appears  
In written fixity?

Conjectures all and knowledge ever closed!  
Whate'er man's diligence, he shall not find  
Interpretation clear and unopposed  
Of this dynamic mind.

For ages we have sought it chill with fear,  
Eternal life dependent on our care.  
The one true meaning surely shall appear  
To anxious seekers there.

Detraction of the godhead nought atones.  
To understand aright what Jesus said,  
The wise man every enterprise postpones,  
Indemnified when dead.

Then shall his right opinion win him all,  
While him of wrong opinion fiends await.  
Council and Synod, then ye rulers, call  
Regardful of our fate.

Define the words in which alone is life,  
And they who shall depart from them shall be  
As branches by a salutary knife  
Cut from a goodly tree.

This fell on man, this pitiful, abject  
Disloyalty to all that he had won;  
His speculative independence checked,  
So brilliantly begun.

The writers and the thinkers of the past  
Became obscure to his enfeebled mind;  
All knowledge as theology was classed,  
Or left unused behind.

Scarcely to-day we frame the fearless thought  
Unconsciously which Plato, Plutarch knew,  
So thoroughly has education taught  
The sacerdotal view.

So taught that sacred knowledge is supreme,  
While knowledge which is secular presides  
O'er mere corroboration of a scheme  
Authority provides.

Is therefore nearly useless, or profane  
If it presume to qualify the Plan—  
And this is here, this ill-advised disdain  
Of intellectual man,

Here in this Volume. What a chronicle!  
What centuries of dulness to its count!  
How ominously intellect is null  
And faith the whole amount

In these strange pages! And here too, alas,  
Intolerance is girded with a sword,  
Division counselled, and anathemas  
Of easy success stored;

Source of such dreadful deluges of blood,  
Such frantic hate, such voices smitten dumb,  
That one has vision of supreamer good  
Had Jesus never come!

And yet, behold, however we explain,  
The spirit of two thousand years ago  
Shines through the barrier of words again  
With tranquillizing glow.



A being of an elemental will,  
A love and purpose moving like a flame—  
These still are in this ancient book, and still  
To-morrow are the same.

Armor of light the Galilean wears,  
Love on his lips has implications new,  
His blessing its amazing virtue shares  
As when it touched the Jew.

The root of Jesse still puts forth the green,  
This page has still a quality apart,  
Its accents, still miraculously keen,  
Invade the very heart.

In the great mystery of human life,  
Its shadowy sense of unity withheld,  
Its many in irrevocable strife,  
A teacher of affliction he excelled.

Subjects of human triumph he ignored,  
Knowledge and Beauty were not of his theme;  
That brilliant and illimitable hoard  
He viewed with disesteem.

Erring and humbled man his one domain,  
And there with such authority he led,  
So pure, so perfect, the accomplished gain  
That rival counsels fled.

And the awed world inclined to ghostly things—  
Sin and escape from sin became the whole.  
Knowledge and Beauty on affrighted wings  
Depart the human soul.

And many a loss we since have had to bear,  
From then till now commanded to express  
Our secular advance in terms which wear  
His scorn of our success.

Commanded by an overwhelming will,  
A resolutely spiritual aim  
To glorify a single truth and ill  
To brook another claim,  
To rest upon an utterance which still  
To-morrow is the same.

## II

And though his meaning is so seldom clear,  
Two thoughts he gave which one who runs  
may read—  
To hate the forms which make man insincere  
And pity those who need.

To pass the shows and shams which meet our  
sight  
And lead the inner life from hour to hour,  
Straight from realities to feed our light  
And nurse our failing power.

Do this and follow me, he often says;  
The letter kills, the carnal-minded die;  
Follow with me the profitable ways  
Of understanding high.

Alas, how little could he give the key!  
What is more fixed in those who bear his name  
Than reverence for that formality  
Which he exposed to shame?

He wished that men should see beneath the  
    form  
The spirit, and give heed to that alone.  
Our words and acts, he said, which first are  
    warm,  
Repeated, turn to stone.

An unrelenting vigil was his creed;  
He bade us watch our conduct with an eye  
Alert to see the meaning of each deed  
In which our lives go by.

Alert to know when change is taking place,  
The cold encroaching and the lip no more  
Voicing the heart, which needs for its slow pace  
A like interpreter.

He knew that outer rule for inner life  
Should be suspected, lest the meaner thing  
Outwit the greater and by subtle strife  
A slave to triumph bring.

A spiritual scrutiny, a task  
Of constant self-observance ours must be  
Lest we, without our knowledge, wear the mask  
Which hides the Pharisee.

To-day men seek not contact with his page,  
Nor read his word with interest at all;  
That which he feared has come, the formal age  
Of faith conventional.

His truth has suffered, as all truths indeed,  
All spiritual truths, from what at birth  
Was simple, loving, reverential deed  
Without a taint of earth.

To dramatize an all-important hour,  
Impress the value of some word supreme,  
External Christian usages their power  
Drew from a living stream.

At first they sprang spontaneous from the heart,  
Rich with emotion deeply felt and strong,  
But now are very alien to that part,  
A surface-rooted throng.

Mere parasites, they injure where they rest,  
They make a wearisome, unheeded thing  
The book of Jesus, prejudice the quest  
Of what he had to bring.

It mars the grace and beauty of his word  
To use it thus in every hackneyed way;  
To read it when a certain bell is heard  
Upon a certain day.

To leave its exposition all to men  
Who spend their lives in this pursuit alone  
And rarely to the sanity attain  
Of minds completely grown.

Who in implacable routine must feel  
Renewal of the spiritual sense—  
A glory not accorded at appeal  
Of mere convenience.

Who long have lost audacity of mind—  
Complacent, worldly, imitative, dull—  
Interpreters of Jesus! Thus the blind  
Explain the beautiful.

And they who in a useless building learn  
To link their thought of Jesus with a spot  
Called sacred, how indifferent they turn  
To places hallowed not!

They judge themselves by what they do within  
The edifice called holy; it is there,  
Remote from life, they would encounter sin.  
Jesus is not a care

Outside of this most artificial pile,  
Out where the sunlight has no colored stain,  
Out where interpretation of his smile  
Is worldly loss or gain.

The cold is at their hearts; a prophet's task—  
Jesus himself could scarcely set them free,  
Unconscious hypocrites who wear the mask  
Which hides the Pharisee.

And yet, unless his meaning will apply  
To life to-day, unless the Christian face  
Reveals itself to every passer-by,  
Why should it claim our grace?

Why should we honor as a living creed  
That which in practice shows no fruit at all?  
Away with it, except its deathless seed,  
The Book original.

Strange that of all who throng about his doors  
Are few whose closeness to him he could praise,  
Few who can use his spiritual stores  
In new and vital ways.

Strange that the persons whom he held in  
scorn,  
The dead of spirit and the worldly-wise,  
Are counted at the altar's very horn,  
And scarce their thoughts disguise.

Who shall re-state it, who shall make it live?  
Within are fightings and without are fears;  
Yet have his riches nothing left to give  
After this space of years?

The strength of his appeal is still as warm—  
What icy diffidence restrains it now,  
No more a cause of spiritual storm  
Of self-forgetful and impulsive vow?

Is it that all truths have their franker hour  
And then in panic apprehension dwell,  
Afraid to venture their relaxing power  
Beyond their citadel?

Captives of their own fears who lie concealed  
Behind a vast, impenetrable wall,  
And only for great dangers take the field  
At some long interval?

Not once, but many times, his light has quelled  
Forms unessential to his scheme of love;  
And shall it now, its enemies repelled,  
Again to triumph move?

Answer, St. Francis, Luther, Wesley, all  
Who the new wine from ancient vessels drew,  
Whose names the great awakenings recall!  
Yet this we think is true:

More broad and high has the obstruction  
    grown  
Between the Teacher and the heart of man.  
It has been breached, but never overthrown,  
Nor altered in its plan.

Unless his book by unsupported power  
Compel a recognition of his worth,  
The name of Jesus at no distant hour  
Shall perish from the earth.

And were he left to take his proper place,  
And things ecclesiastic swept away,  
Mankind might see his influence retrace  
The steps of its decay.

### III

And first of western sages to the world  
He taught that pity of the weak which flows,  
A stream of light down times on chaos hurled;  
And broadening as it goes,



It reaches us to-day, and deep and wide  
Its beams transpierce the ever-threatening shade  
Of force and selfishness which press to hide  
The path the light has made.

And all our hopes are with this precious light.  
Does it advance or does it shrink in power?  
Grow men unselfish, or is every flight  
Made in a favored hour

Offset by some reaction black and deep,  
Which leaves our level at the end the same?  
Do the old foes the old positions keep  
Under a change of name?

What of the voices,\* scarce to be withstood  
Though lately heard, that by a selfish way  
Has man proceeded to his present good,  
Whate'er the heart may say?

What of the knowledge out of Jesus' reach,  
Which gives to love of self a higher place,  
An explanation which he did not teach,  
A value for the race

Which, lacking this possession, had not borne  
The cosmic turbulence, had strength to show—  
Enchanting product of a later morn—  
The flowers of pity grow?

\* The development of man from lower forms of life.

Shall we, then, say that selfishness implies  
Reproach not always, since by this we live,  
A factor of the excellence we prize,  
A need imperative;

And hesitate to acquiesce in heart  
With that renunciation full, complete,  
Which Jesus teaches as the noblest part,  
Whence but the base retreat?

Who can reply to this, though weal or woe  
Seems in the word; who venture to assign  
A lawful status to this lawless foe  
Of all we call divine?

Some larger synthesis time may afford,  
And sympathy for others deep and full  
Unite with self-assertion in accord  
Profound and durable.

But we to-day, who scarcely can discern  
Approach to it, must be content to see  
Unselfishness from selfishness still turn  
In bitter enmity;

Must feel the war within us, and must go,  
Rent with the strife. And Jesus on this shore  
The value of unselfishness shall show  
For generations more;

Shall gather those who would repair their loss,  
Who ethical replenishment would find—  
Although his love is proved not by the cross,  
Nor sacrifice designed.

Thence he may rise, a new-established King.  
His next awakening, if such there be,  
May speed his messages upon the wing  
Of human sympathy.

For this it is men call for, search, and plan  
And for a common ground of action sigh—  
And Jesus mirrors as no other man  
The dayspring from on high.

Who more than he can expedite the hour  
When kindness and sincerity shall own  
Something beyond the hollow forms of power  
On great occasions shown?

Who more than he can teach mankind to say  
What the deceitfulness of riches is?  
A knowledge which is how remote to-day  
From our idea of bliss!

And yet a knowledge which man must acquire,  
A narrow road where he must set his feet,  
A spiritual, purifying fire  
As of the Paraclete!

Let them but feel the value of the heart,  
The voices of the world a time be dumb—  
The children of the bridechamber shall start  
To find the bridegroom come.

Come with a force of vitalizing will,  
A love and purpose moving like a flame,  
The tidings of an inwardness, a skill  
Reality to name:  
A spiritual influence which still  
To-morrow is the same.

## SUNSET IN EARLY NOVEMBER

BURNING from the sun beneath it,  
Mounts the yellow light;  
High the gathering shadows wreathe it,  
Further back the night.

Silent pools along this roadside,  
Black as Usher's tarn,  
Sailed by leaf-boats drifting broadside,  
Fringed by pallid fern.

Leaves still green and clinging brightly  
To the tree above;  
Leaves abased in heaps, where lightly  
Rustling field mice move.

Softest browns among the grasses  
In the violet haze;  
Birch trees, ranged in graceful masses  
On the western blaze.

Where the corn-stalks' ashen streamers  
Totter in decay,  
Spent, forlorn, abandoned dreamers  
Of a sunnier day.

Now upon this sea of yellow,  
Bathing half the sky,  
Where the saffron faints, and mellow,  
Softer ochres lie—

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Lo, a wreath of radiance sailing!  
Pearl and fire and dew  
Blend and triumph o'er the paling,  
Fading, sunset hue,

And become the moon—while yonder,  
O'er the ragged pines,  
Where the stern, dark giants ponder,  
Soft Capella shines.

Star of beauty in the ocean  
Of the darkened north,  
Led by thee as hosts in motion  
Myriad stars come forth.

Thus the sky—on earth the shadows  
Make their stealthy way,  
Lesser colors through the meadows  
Sinking into gray.

Fainter now the graceful, feathered  
Heads of wayside weed;  
Dark the sturdy cat-tails weathered,  
With their cottony seed.

Lost the ground pine spreading, starting,  
Green where all is dead;  
Lost the glorious, purple, parting  
Light from oak trees shed:

Lost—yet still on thin, tall bushes  
Scarlet berries glow,  
Points of flame that burst in gushes  
From each leafless bough.

Still the moon, the sky, the blending  
Peace which wraps the earth;  
Peace like sleep, its forces lending  
For a springtime birth.

Not like death—his step seems distant  
From this breathing calm;  
Summer's stress no more insistent,  
Night comes down like balm.

## PAUL

THE path of rose and violet for him  
Were made amiss; he set his willing feet  
On ways of baffling sand and desert heat,  
And, lo, they blossomed to the very brim!  
A loving watcher where the light grew dim,  
He trod the Syrian, Asian, Grecian shore  
And in impassioned words his witness bore,  
Facing the beasts or fiercer Sanhedrim.  
With strong and tragic touch the story stands;  
The vengeful Jew, the lordly Roman, here  
Pass and re-pass with armed or naked hands,  
And weeping churches turn to him in fear—  
The legate of the Word in pagan lands,  
The Pharisee of exposition clear.

In Antioch and distant Macedon,  
Where voices called him; before Gallio's seat  
(The philosophic sage whose nature sweet  
The censure of indifference has won);  
In Lystra, where the people shout and run,  
The simple townsfolk crowd along the way,  
The priests lead victims all with ribbons gay;  
In Athens, where his words were scarce begun.  
What struggles and what boundless strength  
of soul,  
Increasing and expanding with his need!  
Still longer journeys draw him to the goal,  
And bright upon the pages which we read



Fresh feeling, almost gaiety, control,  
And youthfulness of heart is here indeed.

And when the south wind softly blew, for Rome  
He sailed, a memorable way ;  
Before the smoke of that tremendous Day  
Which wrapped the falling capital in gloom.  
Ere Nero to his worst estate had come,  
And one the Christian commonwealth might  
share,

Although within the squalid Trastevere  
It lurked that hour in an ignoble home.  
And here, where human strength had built its  
tower

On high o'er the bewildered sons of men,  
He dwelt, and let his spirit every hour  
Sweep forth on word or ever-active pen ;  
Impalpable as flame, yet with its power  
Piercing the structure once and yet again.

His value is not all in what he taught.  
A character like his is unconfined,  
Although with fetters of the verbal kind  
It is obliged to circumscribe its thought.  
Paul must be felt, his spirit must be caught,  
His concentration to an end be seen,  
His hold on aids which keep our nature green,  
To guess the impact by his presence wrought.  
That genius for the inner life he had

Which men assert and constantly deny.  
In matter all we know or have seems clad  
Till such as Paul speak forth convincingly.  
Then what was mechanism dull or sad,  
Movement and meaning touch and beautify.

## HAUD IMMEMOR

To be alone no more, nor feel  
About me like some heavy air  
The sense that men are cased in steel,  
The sense that none his thought can share  
When nearest to his woe or weal.

The sense of haste that one must now,  
Before another day be passed,  
This vital failure disavow,  
Go forth and find a friend at last,  
And bind him with an iron vow.

To hold no more a snow white tress  
With saddened eyes, and think of one  
To whom old age and loneliness  
A sweet, relenting face had shown,  
So much she grew in gentleness;

So much in evenness of thought;  
Wise and discerning, yet not cold.  
In dull surroundings she had sought  
For life's essentials, and was old  
Only in what the years had brought:

In the hair's whiteness, in the foot  
Unsteady, in the night's lost sleep;  
Not in the store of youth's best fruit—  
Love, and ambition warm and deep  
The plans of love to execute.

And thus, though illness brought her low,  
And all the treasures of her mind  
Were whirled away like aimless snow,  
And wild confusion left behind,  
And in the end death came too slow ;

Yet what she had been once was dear,  
And almost might return again  
On days when the sad face would clear  
And the old habit of the brain  
Arouse itself and reappear

Like broken sunshine. Though, indeed,  
This was the hardest part of all,  
To see with what pathetic speed  
She sought her kingdom to recall  
Of books she could no longer read.

Letting one's hope not quite depart ;  
Making the final loss a grief  
Not less afflicting to the heart  
Because there mingled some relief  
With sorrow's more abundant part.

I found a box which she had filled  
With trifles, relics of the past—  
A card, a picture—she was skilled  
In spells which hold the memory fast  
And keep its sweetness undistilled.

A box of paper only, round  
And shallow, with faint specks of mould  
Scattered about its lining browned;  
And on the cover manifold  
Quaint flowers adorn the soft, white ground.

Where, in designs of low relief,  
An old-time pattern in a ring  
About the border, and with leaf  
Abundant, sprays of roses spring  
Full-blown, as if their day were brief.

And growing freely by their side  
Are buds of wood-anemone—  
Although two spring time months divide—  
And then, for added symmetry,  
A scrollwork circle comes to guide

To where a wreath of other flowers  
Is in the centre; purple flag,  
Ruffled as if by drenching showers;  
Wild strawberry, whose blossoms lag  
Upon the box till summer hours;

A rose with petals broadly spread;  
Then a white blossom tinged with blue—  
Some alien—and the whole portrayed  
Not stiffly, but as if they grew,  
These flowers, and knew of sun and shade.

A trifling thing and yet with charm;  
The faded colors have an air  
Which somehow fits them to disarm  
The dark regrets which harbor there,  
Beneath the cover's sheltering arm.

An air as if these flowers had come  
From gardens long forgot of men,  
Where in neglect they made their home,  
And saw no human denizen  
With menace of contagion roam;

To teach them griefs and scatter wide  
A useless knowledge of our ways.  
And, somehow, this unconscious pride,  
This wild aloofness, merits praise,  
Or seems to while my fancies bide.

For thus they charm the more, and make  
My box the place to keep a thing  
Whose sad suggestions are awake.  
Almost disdain these flowers bring  
For what I deem so great a stake—

A tress of hair on which the light  
Is soft and lustrous, though the day  
When its companions passed from sight  
Is now four winter suns away,  
And summers three have taken flight.

A few dark lines are scattered through,  
But all the rest are of the tree  
Which in the Preacher's garden grew  
To warn him of infirmity,  
And blossomed when his years were few.

The almond tree shall flourish—so  
The figure runs by which the hair  
Of age is likened, not to snow  
With all its coldness, but to fair,  
\* White almond blooms, which live and grow.

And though I think he knew it not,  
This blossom, safely cut and laid  
With loving feeling where no jot  
Of Man's profaneness can invade  
And do it outrage, has the lot

Accorded it to raise the form  
Of one long vanished, bring again  
The face and voice, allay the storm  
A moment of regret and pain  
And desolation multiform.

A talisman if rightly used,  
A treasure which this box has hid  
For years, until the thoughts are fused,  
And every figure on the lid  
Is as significant perused.

\* The blossoms of the bitter almond are white, those  
of the sweet almond, pink.

And shall the charm depart because  
I am alone no more, nor feel  
As one of life's unchanging laws  
The sense that men are cased in steel  
And hide their thoughts as fatal flaws?

Because the change has come to me  
Than which few greater now will come—  
The laying of the stormy sea,  
The purpose which will not succumb  
Until the last extremity?

Because I have the way discerned  
Of access to a human heart,  
Have there the ways of knowledge learned,  
And seen, although but yet in part,  
The treasures which by love are earned?

No, it will stay, the charm will stay;  
The box will be the same; the flowers,  
The tress of hair will see no day  
In whose adverse, malignant hours  
My thought of her will know decay.

Years of my life will still be where  
The force of her unselfish love  
Gave all the warmth the frozen air  
Afforded, when dejection throve  
And wisdom came in moments rare.



But happiness which filled a nook  
Is now a tree of stature grown,  
And often intercepts the look  
Which backward on the past is thrown,  
And will not the transmission brook.

Its strong, young foliage is a screen,  
Its blossoms hang in golden light;  
Behind is little clearly seen,  
And nothing seen on which the blight  
Of sorrow rests with settled mien.

The lovely, half-transparent haze  
Makes all my memories partly fair,  
The bitterness of former days  
Becomes transmuted, has an air  
Of profit in unlooked-for ways.

That which gives pleasure will remain;  
But for the rest its power is gone.  
When Joy has won the crown from Pain  
He does not wish to share his throne,  
Nor rebels to disturb his reign.

Not when the battle he has won  
Is vast, decisive, bringing peace;  
Not when his sway has just begun,  
And soberly, without caprice,  
He gazes on a cloudless sun.

## PROGRESS

### SONNETS ON THE BOER WAR

HOLLAND, a great inheritance is thine.  
Thy destinies in very childhood came:  
On the mud islands Rome could barely tame,  
Though Cæsar and though Drusus led the line;  
Or in Rome's quarrel, where thy warriors shine,  
Bucklering the giantess' expiring power.  
The Frank fell back before thee in his hour  
Of triumph on the subjugated Rhine.  
Yet what was this to constancy which woke  
And made thee unsubduable when Spain.  
Threw down the sheath, and cruel stroke on  
stroke  
Fell on thee in an avalanche of pain:  
Take heed then, England, not thy native oak  
Is more unyielding to the hurricane.

And what though Joubert fall? A nation's  
cause

Is not one man; it is the hastening feet  
Of swelling thousands, is the steady beat  
Of hearts which one supreme conviction draws.  
Leaders will rise. We need not ask the saws  
Of old experience when a Saxon race  
Has lost its captain and the velt's brown face  
Has made them soldiers by its very laws.  
Leaders! the land's emotion gives them birth.  
William, then Maurice scarce of less renown;

Navarre after Coligny. Was there any dearth  
By ancient Tiber when the best were down  
At Cannæ? Nay, the dull Iberian earth  
How opulent beneath Napoleon's frown!

Botha, Dewet, and De la Rey!  
The little nation's hope now rests on these.  
Encompassed by devouring flame, she sees  
No outlet to the blue of Freedom's day.  
She sees the cynic world upon its way  
Stare at her anguish with untroubled eye;  
She sees about their homes her burghers die;  
Her strength is spent, her face with toil is gray.  
Vain has been all her valor, all her blood;  
Converging armies every point assail,  
The Boer republics perish in the flood,  
And money and the modern way prevail.  
The champions of Progress long withstood,  
May now take up the interrupted tale.

It will not always be so. Men will feel  
The value of diversity again.  
Some time this pressure on the heart and brain  
Which makes us all alike, this mould of steel  
Will be relaxed; the disproportioned zeal  
And appetite for riches will be known  
At last to be destructive of its own  
And only pretext, happiness; the seal  
Of desolation will be seen impressed  
On natures which this lying god has gained;

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Rank growths of qualities which men detest,  
By homage at that shrine will be explained;  
And we shall that day wonder how the best  
We ever hoped where this mad cult had reigned.

Here was a type most worthy to survive—  
Simple and strong, and in a desert place  
Keeping its mark of patriarchal race,  
And happy in a homely way to thrive;  
Unmoved, or scarce at least inquisitive,  
As to our fetich of commercial power;  
Despisers of this fever-laden hour  
When things inanimate are most alive.  
Enraged we cry, "Your mediæval way  
Obstructs the onward destinies of man.  
Accept the policy which all obey,  
Or fall beneath the universal ban.  
Industrial growth, the cloudless bourgeois day,  
Advance it, or give place to those who can."

And so for their traditions, at the verge  
Of the Tugēla they await their fate;  
Not by this logic even stirred to hate  
Against the thousands which upon them surge;  
Shouting no war cry, almost with a dirge  
That they are forced to shed this kindred  
blood—

A citizen militia of the mood  
When war and peace their dispositions merge.  
And they who love thee, England, and thy tale

Of glory unsurpassed since Roman time,  
Must still mourn not to see the iron flail  
Of havoc and disgrace reward thy crime.  
Well had it been if thou couldst wholly fail,  
Nor painfully at last to conquest climb.

Colenso, Magersfontein, and the days  
Before his utmost levies reached the foe!  
Why should this people not be free to go  
In peace along their Afrikaner ways?  
Should their frugality suspicion raise?  
Is but one standard of attainment left,  
And that commercial; and is it a theft  
If some elect for unfamiliar praise?  
Farmers and herdsmen they aspired to be,  
And from their sunburnt velt they brought to  
light

The homely traits which signalize the free—  
The self-reliance which they showed in fight,  
The shrewdness mixed with much simplicity,  
The moderation when their hopes were bright.

Why should not Dutchmen govern Africa,  
Which they had won by every human claim?  
They settled it, subdued it, gave each name  
To mountain, dorp, and drift from shore to  
shore.

Their impress was upon it. Not the ore  
Of the Rand's golden reefs engaged them there,

They came for freedom; their unchanging  
prayer

To be a state, though primitive and poor.  
Land of Van Tromp and Hals, was this amiss?  
Were not thy sons as fit as other men  
To fashion civilized communities?  
Must all be English; shall the world not gain  
Except upheld by England's sympathies,  
Her selfish wealth and commerce sovereign?

The sway of commerce in this time of ours  
Is too insistent, and its hard ideals,  
Like some machine with its steam-driven wheels,  
Do scanty justice to man's total powers.  
Commerce brought light and scattered many  
flowers

In days when spiritual purpose fed  
Freely the human heart, but this is fled,  
Or barely touches the mechanic hours.  
Our strange intentness we would spread to all,  
Exulting in it as the perfect plan,  
And where we go we work the speedy fall  
Of systems based on other views of man.  
They yield before us as the city wall  
When Joshua's fatal trumpet notes began.

It is not only that an unjust war  
Was waged in Africa, and wrong prevailed.  
That is not rare enough to be bewailed—

An act of spoliation, less or more.  
Nor is it that the conquest of the Boer  
Was more tyrannical in some degree  
Than other conquests, though the race was free  
And ancient marks of consecration wore.  
These are sad thoughts, but it is still more sad  
That with the world's consent the deed was  
done;  
That actions which seem principally bad  
More than mere toleration should have won;  
That Progress, in her robes of triumph clad,  
Rejoiced to see the Boer overthrown.

But this is history, the wise man says, and  
turns  
To record after record of the past.  
Conservatism has gone down at last  
On every shore the watchful eye discerns.  
Progress, the unimpassioned reader learns,  
Was found at last to be in things which seemed  
As hideous as nightmare ever dreamed,  
So that the heart with indignation burns.  
Cæsar smote Gaul and left a million men  
In death upon its carnage crimsoned sod,  
And yet his country's arts, unknown till then,  
So wrought within the people that the rod  
Of Tartar fury was supported when  
Apocalyptic fell the Scourge of God.

Perhaps some change our destiny prepares  
By which the ways of thought will know decay,  
The oracles which kindle in our clay  
A little life above material cares.  
Perhaps the formula which Science bears,  
Giving to man almost omnipotence,  
Will yet engross him through each outer sense  
Until his spirit, overwhelmed, despairs.  
Progress perhaps now wars on those who think  
That human happiness is surest laid  
Upon foundations which securely sink  
Down to a nature rich by its own aid;  
Where toil and failure temper every link,  
And moth and rust no longer make afraid.

Progress perhaps is of the flesh, and we,  
It may be, now are standing on the verge,  
Or rather slowly rising with the surge  
Of a great change whose end we cannot see.  
For never in such volume, deep and free,  
Poured wealth from the earth's bosom, nor the  
day  
Shone when such prizes drew men to the fray,  
Nor conquerors had such supremacy.  
What wonder if we turn our eyes in vain  
The simple and self-affluent to find!  
The views of life which soon supreme will reign  
Will make a type to high attainment blind,  
An age where spiritual forces wane,  
And matter is the sole concern of mind.



Gold, thou dost make the nations great; a  
nation poor

Is helpless, undeveloped, in the dark.

Thou comest, and as from a living spark,  
Life, genius, knowledge spread from shore to  
shore.

Again thou comest with a richer load,  
And virtue fades and high ideals fly,  
And none thy strange seductions can put by;  
Thy worship now the undisputed code.  
All are infected, though we blame a few;  
The Nessus robe, which none can tear away,  
Eats to the heart like any poison true,  
And lesser men the nation's forces sway;  
More selfish and more polished, with no clue  
To the high promise of a former day.

Yet though this be so, though the change be  
come,

It means not that man's compact will be rent,  
Nor down to chaos and destruction sent  
The quick-demolished structure of his home.  
The generation to which we succumb  
Will find the changed conditions, but will have  
No knowledge of the things we sought to save,  
Nor why the effort was a martyrdom.  
They will not know our trouble, will forecast  
Only what their new views of life allow.

Let us not err and think of dangers vast  
As if the world approached a crisis now;  
The sense of loss at which we stand aghast,  
They will ingenuously disavow.

Each age has its philosophy, and this  
Seems to it of the very frame of things.  
The Past an incoherent product brings  
And humbly asks us for the synthesis —  
Or so it seems to those whose destinies  
Are linked with each particular of time.  
The past is sordid—or is it sublime?  
We judge at last by what the Present is.  
So they will judge. A generation born  
To other standards and conceptions new  
Will be the present, though it cherish scorn  
For every spiritual purpose true,—  
Will be the present, and the later morn  
And final judgment on our dimmer view.

They will not know our trouble. But be sure  
The heart and mind of man will not be left  
Plundered in perpetuity; the theft  
Condoned, forgotten for a sorry lure  
Of bribes material. Excess brings cure  
Of such indulgence, and when man has spent  
The frenzy of his sense, he will repent,  
And will bethink him of the home secure

Made by the spirit, all adorned with light,  
Where dwells the chiefest good his fate can give.  
Then back again will roll the doubtful fight;  
Interpretations will arise and live  
Which make mere wealth as worthless to the  
sight  
As it is now the boon superlative.

## THE APPLE TREE

SUNLIGHT shed from August skies,  
Tree of green and trunk of gray,  
This was all for watchful eyes  
Later scarce than yesterday.  
Now the flush of rising day  
Red upon the foliage lies.

Dandelions all about  
In the matted grasses blow—  
Autumn's tall and yellow scout,  
Not like those of April's glow,  
Those we welcome after snow,  
Doubly loved for winter's rout.

These are smaller, scarcely seen,  
In the wealth of summer light,  
With their slender stalks of green.  
Scattered clover tops are bright  
Here and there, but most the blight  
Of old age makes black and lean.

August nears its end, anew  
Come the apples turning red.  
Once before this daybreak hue  
Mingled with the leaves o'erhead,  
When the mating orioles sped  
And the skies were deeper blue

And the blossoms of young May  
Clothed the tree. At first they peep,  
Rosy buds along each spray,  
In the fresh, green leaves asleep;  
Then with sudden wakening leap,  
Fully opened to the day.

Every twig is deep in flowers;  
Some are white, but others lean  
Faintest pink in heavy showers  
Where the redder buds have been;  
Or the leaves are scarcely seen,  
Buried in the fragrant bowers.

Such unnumbered blossoms here,  
Such perfection in each limb,  
One could linger hours near,  
Looking till the tree makes dim  
Almost with its silver rim,  
The blue, bounding atmosphere.

May had scarce a fairer sight—  
Some will love the dogwood more  
With its grave and mystic white  
Rich in undeciphered lore.  
Groups of columbine restore  
Beauty's seasonable rite,

Growing near the rugged face  
Of old ledges in a field ;  
Where dark cedars interlace,  
Birches cluster, half-revealed ;  
And the joyful grasses yield  
Here and there a dwelling place

For this flower, whose color warm,  
Red and yellow, strange and gay,  
Suits its fragile, graceful form  
And its bending wood nymph way,  
As it rests against the gray  
Like a sunbeam in a storm.

May, the chosen of the year!  
—Yet with other gifts than dwell  
In the apples growing here,  
Redder by some inward spell,  
Peaceful, irresistible,  
In the dying summer's air.

With profusion for her boast  
Came the lovely month of flowers ;  
Perfect things in such a host  
That the days seemed only hours ;  
Little time allowed the powers  
Of the mind accordant most

To observe and feel. The sun  
Set upon a different world  
Than it saw when day begun,  
Rising over grasses pearled.  
Almost in a night unfurled,  
By the south wind's pleading won,

Came the apple blossoms sweet;  
Passes scarce another day,  
All the rosy colors fleet,  
White the shrouded branches sway;  
Then, e'er we can turn away,  
Petals flutter at our feet.

Nought is lovelier, but nought  
Is more transient—one must haste,  
Keep the season in his thought,  
Keep the vital hours from waste,  
Lest their meaning be effaced  
Ere it be remotely caught.

Summer sweeps us on and, lo,  
Amid avenues of leaves,  
Unremarked the apples grow,  
Incident one scarce perceives.  
Glimpse of gray bark interweaves—  
That is all the tree can show.

That was all for watchful eyes  
Later scarce than yesterday;  
Now the light of August skies  
Supplements the green and gray;  
Color of the rising day  
Warm upon the foliage lies.

Some are deep and red as wine  
In Burgundian valleys pressed;  
Outermost they hang, and shine  
Fully by the sun caressed.  
These are richest, but the rest  
Seem to sleep and strife decline

Where they hide untouched by change,  
Deep in leaves or growing low,  
Still of green, and almost strange  
Look in contrast with the glow  
Which another day will show,  
Redder if one chance to range

Here to-morrow. Something sweet,  
Something permanent and true,  
They will gain through days of heat,  
Through September's nights of dew.  
Branches where the blossoms grew,  
Ye shall have a charm less fleet!



Something of the youth of man,  
Of the golden Doric age;  
Goatherds with the summer tan  
From Theocritus's page  
Would have loved this vicinage,  
Seated through the noon of Pan.

Would have thought this fruit as fit  
Prize of song as bowl of wood  
Filled with milk of favorite  
She-goat, had they seen the flood  
Of the sun's autumnal mood  
And the apples all alit.

Here the ripe cicalas ring,  
Here are elms, though not the same,  
Here a moment lingering,  
In the hollow stand like flame  
Cardinals, an unknown name  
Which the Coan \* did not sing.

Here are acrid barberries;  
Drooping clusters of dull red  
Soon will make a graceful prize  
Of each laden twig; and wed  
With the bush is garlanded  
Bitter-sweet in friendly wise;

\* Theocritus.

Where, upheld by tendrils small,  
Yellow berries shine till when  
They are flowers. And this is all  
Not of Sicily nor men  
Southern-voiced, but back again  
Brings us to New England's fall.

Season beautiful, and loved  
For thy beauty, and yet more  
For thy length and for thy proved  
Constancy, which lets us pore  
Undisturbed on all thy lore,  
So serenely thou has moved;

Bringing permanence with change  
For each moment, bidding stay  
Side by side in contact strange  
Elements of rival sway;  
In such fit, harmonious way  
New and old the scene arrange.

Apple tree, the joy is thine  
To begin this season rare;  
All associations twine  
With thee; thou man's homely care  
Oft has seen; thou hast a share  
In his spirit's discipline.

Thou hast seen the harvest-home  
Of old England sweep along;  
Seen the yellow gleanings come,  
Nodding through the rustic throng;  
Seen the village gay with song,  
Dance, and jest adventuresome.

On our hillsides, in our fields,  
Near the farmhouse small and low,  
Which the great barn partly shields,  
Where in hard succession go  
Summer, winter; and the slow,  
Duller mind to sameness yields—

Thou art an unfailing friend;  
Fair, and bountiful as fair,  
In the summer's stately end,  
In the calm autumnal air;  
Apples red contrasting there  
With the green of leaves which blend

Into peaceful skies above—  
Softer it may be, more gray  
Than in summer, yet which prove  
Background perfect for display  
Of the colors which each day  
In increasing splendor move.

Move along the grassy swamp  
Where to flame the maples turn,  
Each transmuting from the damp,  
Peaty soil of its sojourn,  
Some strange fire which makes it burn  
Like an ever-furnished lamp.

While perchance the water near,  
Shrunk by the summer's heat,  
Gives us back an image clear  
Painted with resemblance sweet,  
Perfect where the brook's retreat  
Widens to a little mere;

To a little pool where ripe  
Cranberries are nestled down;  
Ivy of ill-omened type,  
Yet with leaves which are the crown  
Almost of the month's renown,  
Decks a wall with yellow stripe.

And the apples to the scene  
Add an acquiescent tone;  
Bluebirds pass with note serene,  
Singing as in March—alone;  
Stately squashes have a throne,  
Piled upon verandas clean.

And a soft, brown grass grows high;  
And the woodbine and the elm  
Both have turned; and ever nigh,  
Making all a magic realm,  
Hangs a misty purple film  
In which all dissensions die.

So in harmony the year  
Changes to a winter mood,  
And my homely tree will cheer  
Even then, if understood,  
Those who with perception good  
See its inner character.

Something of domestic air  
Many human contacts give;  
Such thy rugged outlines wear,  
Such suggestions fugitive  
On each curve and angle live,  
Even when thy boughs are bare.

So that on abandoned farms,  
When neglected and o'ergrown,  
A regretful thought alarms,  
Wakens love which cold has grown;  
Makes us feel how much our own,  
Though no human care informs,

Is this kindly tree which here,  
Cumbered with dead wood, and lost,  
Almost with an air of fear  
Struggles with the alien host—  
Cedars, birches, all whose boast  
Is to spread the forest sphere.

Bearing yet a slender weight  
Now of apples gnarled and small;  
Its achievement is a fate  
Hopeless, unequivocal.  
Sadly it awaits its fall,  
Distant from a human mate.

## SUNSET IN PENOBSCOT BAY

OVER the water the red light trembles,  
Making a path on the surges gray  
Back to the hills, where the sun assembles  
Colors which fled from the rising day.  
Gains them to give them back over the heaven—  
Bank of cloud in the cold, dim east,  
Even thy sadness shall have a leaven,  
Thou shalt be seen and be not the least.

Thou shalt be summoned to rosy splendor  
Just at the moment the moon is bright,  
Which in the sky like a watchman tender  
Hovers above thee in fleecy white.  
Soon shall she change and become a golden,  
Solid orb in the shady blue,  
Held serene on her pathway olden,  
Far beyond wraiths of the mist and dew.

Then shall the hand of the sunset touch thee.  
Now thou art changing! Almost too hard  
First are the garish reds which clutch thee,  
Leaving thee savage and battle-scarred.  
Soon the color to rose will soften,  
Delicate, blooming, and making a home  
Far in the east where the eye turns often  
Back from the scarlet and flaming dome.

On the deck of this lonely vessel,  
Out in the bay with the great wide sky,  
Nothing is lost till the faint stars nestle  
Under the clouds grown black and high.  
All the flame of the gorgeous burning  
Fading to brown where the south is cool,  
Touches of green for a time sojourning,  
Spaces where distance and silence rule.

All of the loveliness, all of the sadness—  
Sadness shrinks not from such a sight.  
This is beauty too brief for gladness  
With no thought of the coming night.  
Too much it tells of variation,  
Passing wave of the cosmic sea,  
Glory, beauty in exaltation,  
Lost to-morrow in vacancy.

Lo, a schooner of mighty pinions,  
Mast on mast with a press of sail,  
Bound with lumber to far dominions,  
Deep in the water with low, green rail!  
Scarcely the foam on her forefoot rises,  
Such is her weight as she beats to sea,  
Though her canvas a spread comprises  
Potent for Actium's victory.



Suddenly into the evening's splendor  
Rises a whistle, hoarse and deep,  
Summoning thought to a full surrender,  
Bidding the senses attendance keep.  
Signal we make at the harbor nightly,  
Passing a buoy which guards the mouth,  
Close to an island where green grass brightly  
Shines in the glow of the west and south.

Pass we under a headland covered  
Thick with spruces which darker seem  
Here by these scarlet clouds o'er-hovered,  
Base of truth in a vivid dream.  
Spruces which stand with a stern insistence,  
Calvinists of the northern air,  
Granite-nurtured to strong resistance,  
Type of New England character.

Straight is unfolded many a dwelling,  
Summer dwelling of alien tone,  
Often of blunted perception telling,  
Scorn of the beauty they make their own.  
These recede, and beyond a steeple,  
Rising through groups of graceful trees,  
Shows the home of a passing people  
Rooted in old-time memories.

One's advantage may mean destruction  
To another offending not:  
Life has imparted this stern instruction,  
Commerce this rule of preferment taught.  
Many aver that the Whole progresses,  
That for the world the step is sure,  
That the carnage of man's successes  
Contradicts not a system pure.

Scarce is our motion more than drifting—  
Headway kept by the favoring tide—  
One a coil of rope is lifting  
Ready to throw from the vessel's side.  
Slowly on to where warehouse buildings,  
Faded into a friendly brown,  
Lost in a flood of richer gildings,  
Stand on a wharf below the town.

Now is the sky at its fullest glory.  
All of its vastness feels the sun,  
Sunken but sending unseen a story  
Straight to be told of its work undone.  
Swift as one looks, the colors deepen  
Over the sky, much more intense  
Glow the reds, which will well nigh cheapen  
All that has passed by their opulence.

Clear around the horizon's border  
Up to the zenith on every side  
Each soft cloud is a bright recorder  
Of the sunset's far reaching tide.  
Sent from below the hills, it rushes  
Over all, though no eye can see  
Fountain to feed the fiery gushes  
Almost alive in intensity.

Certain heads of storm cloud yonder,  
Northward, and seeming immensely great,  
Rounded masses of whiteness ponder,  
Yet with their summits in crimson state.  
These are the palaces Shelley painted,  
Such a one we may think received  
Laon after his life untainted,  
Mab from her embassy achieved.

Blue of the sweetest and purest color,  
Where overhead the blue has room,  
While in the east the moon grows fuller  
Every moment of golden bloom.  
Slowly it leaves, this watchman tender,  
Far below it the long, gray bank  
Now at the height of its rosy splendor,  
Portion won when the day-star sank.

Thus we saw thee, Castine, enchanted—  
Not for the first time; many a year  
Passes since some design supplanted  
Brought us up to thy ancient pier.  
Now we are numbered with those who love  
thee,  
Love thy village, thy changes few,  
Find no light such as that above thee,  
No such islands in waves so blue.

Ever the charm of thee more possesses.  
Difficult grows it to disengage  
Thoughts which return as the summer presses,  
Thoughts of thy beautiful heritage.  
In one's mind appears the harbor,  
Laughing down in the noonday gleam,  
While the elms like a pendent arbor,  
Round the edge of the picture stream.

Or to paddle, this July morning,  
Over the bar in the sunshine hot  
To some island where, spite of warning—  
Proof in the past which convinced us not—  
We shall touch with a hope of treasure,  
Something no mainland ever yields,  
Savor the old explorers' pleasure  
In the light over virgin fields.

Overhead great gulls are flying,  
Dropping a moment to touch the sea,  
Which, because of the south wind's dying,  
Slumbers about us glassily.  
Past the buoy are schooners sailing,  
One or two on their sunny way,  
More by the subtle tide prevailing  
Than by wind on this peaceful day.

Scarcely more than a ripple rises  
From the bow with each gentle plunge.  
Drifting by us in many guises,  
Purple sometimes like a tropic sponge,  
Jellyfish pass in the clear, cold water;  
Then a seal's black head is seen,  
Herded once by a sea god's daughter;  
And on the shore, from the bushes green,

Just beyond where he dived abruptly,  
Hermit thrushes give call for call;  
Nothing seems to proceed corruptly  
In the range of that silver fall.  
Past a steep where the birches hover—  
Hanging leaves and a gleam of white—  
Past a bar which the waves will cover,  
Into a bay's unclouded light.

In whose midst is our island sleeping;  
Goldenrods in scanty sprays  
Over the realm a watch are keeping,  
Not as close as in August days.  
Seaweed lies on the beach in masses,  
Left by the tide as it slowly fell;  
Shrivelled nearer the meadow grasses,  
Gold where the sea is sentinel.

And above us a tall oak rises,  
Giving us shade and an open space,  
Grassy and cool, where the view comprises  
Purple hills from the tree's rough base.  
Out through the channel to southward lying,  
Far away o'er a soft, blue sea,  
Which at our island's end is dying,  
Touching the white sand languidly.

What a place to restore the vision  
Seen of poets! Thy mighty Ode  
Seems the voice of a right decision  
As to the place of the soul's abode.  
Beauty here seems undecaying,  
Seems a spirit which deep within  
Flames in matter, a moment staying,—  
Royal, aloof in its origin.

Whether it be that the mystic portal  
Called of life knows us come before;  
Whether it be that the Forms immortal,  
Undistinguished at birth we bore;  
Or a product by time created,  
Beauty descends for a million years—  
Still its wonder is unrelated,  
None deciphers its characters!

Yet distinctive the most and longest  
Dwelling in mind of one away,  
Calling him back with a summons strongest,  
Details clear, without disarray,  
Are the wharves when the sunlight mellow  
Falls from behind in the afternoon,  
Gilding the opposite shore with yellow  
Over the harbor's wide lagoon.

And we muse with a pensive question,  
Linked perhaps with a warehouse red  
Which has many a dim suggestion  
Still of the deep-sea traffic fled.  
Watch the sailboats coming, going,  
Action strong and yet deep repose,  
While each moment the light is growing  
Weightier, dreamier towards its close.

Then we depart as when one searches  
And is repaid with counsel sweet;  
Pass along by the kindly churches;  
Feel the calm of a certain street  
Where the houses are white and spacious,  
Where the shadows are green and gold,  
Where, within garden limits gracious,  
Asters grow and deep marigold.

Many an old New England haven  
Has this interest in decay;  
Once the face of the sea was graven  
By the ships of its early day.  
One on the whaling ground was noted,  
One bore lumber to Martinique,  
One in the ports of China floated,  
Heard the winds of the Arctic shriek.

This, too, had its earlier story,  
Dating back to its soft French name,  
When, in the days of Champlain's glory,  
De la Tour from the northward came.  
In the time when France taught the nations,  
Gave the practice in peace and war,  
And after brilliant consummations,  
Bowed to her great competitor.



Or at a later day, when marching  
Up the hill at the main street's head,  
Facing the sky's most western arching,  
Infantry, clothed in the British red,  
Built them the fort whose ancient glacis  
Even now is so high and steep,  
Loved by those who in favored places  
Follow the sun's descending sweep.

Thither we go as we leave the steamer,  
Apprehensive that even yet  
Up from the west escape a streamer,  
Flaming forth where the sun has set;  
Flaming over the glassy distance  
Where a schooner is dim and gray,  
When like death after long resistance  
Falls the night on Penobscot Bay.

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